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ABSTRACT

The feasibility of combining the resources of the school districts of Ottumwa, Iowa, and neighboring areas with Indian Hills Community College into a comprehensive program for Ottumwa high school students at a regional site was investigated. An articulated vocational program, beginning at the junior high level, would extend through high school, Indian Hills Community College, and perhaps to a baccalaureate degree in technologies. Competency-based curricula were seen to be offered throughout grades 10-14. Technical training and placement would occur through the college. Six assumptions were made by participants: a comprehensive high school is a desired delivery model; a cluster approach to vocational education is desired; high school level vocational education will not be exclusively job specific; the project assists high schools in meeting the requirements of 10 units in 4 out of 5 eligible clusters; parents and students will be involved; and definition will be added to the role of vocational education at both the high school and area school level. (Seven appendices are included: project budget; project staff; participating school districts and administrators; faculty response to Ohio State trip; third-party evaluations; "cooperation is the key"; and news clippings.) (NLA)

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ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 1987 - 30 June 1988

FEASIBILITY STUDY:

HIGH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE PLANNING

"Conduct a Statewide Feasibility Study On the Issues Faced When Cooperation Occurs Between High Schools and Community Colleges In Sharing a Comprehensive Vocational Program At a Regional Site"

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Indian Hills Community College
In Cooperation With:
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INTRODUCTION

High schools today are facing a challenge that has become increasingly difficult to solve with traditional resources. Numerous statewide and national studies provide ample testimony. The National Commission on Excellence, in "A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform," stated the challenge in these terms:

> "More and more young people emerge from high school ready for neither college nor work. This predicament becomes more acute as the knowledge base continues its rapid expansion, the number of traditional jobs shrink, and the new jobs demand greater sophistication and preparation."

Preparing students for jobs demanding "greater sophistication and preparation" puts a demand on traditional resources that is increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to meet.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to: initiate a project that combined the resources of the Ottumwa Community School District, neighboring high schools, Southern Prairie AEA, Indian Hills Community College, and the Department of Education into a comprehensive program for interested high school students of the Ottumwa area at a regional site. Feasibility, planning, development, initiation, and dissemination of the process and results represented vital components in expediting project purpose.

ASSUMPTIONS

Six initial assumptions were made by participants in this study. In the course of the study three of the six remained constant while the other three changed in varying degrees. See page 19 for an analysis of these six assumptions. The assumptions governing the conduct of this study were:

1. A comprehensive high school is a desired model for delivery.
2. A cluster approach to vocational education is a desired approach.
3. High school level vocational education will not be exclusively job specific.
4. This project is designed to assist Iowa high schools to meet the proposed requirement of ten units in four out of five eligible clusters.
5. Parents and students will be involved in this project.
6. This project will attempt to add definition to the role of vocational education at both the high school and area school level in Iowa.

STUDY CHRONOLOGY

(NOTE: All meetings and events which occurred were not included in this report. Only those which were critical to reporting the overall purpose of the study appear.)

The idea of sharing a possible vocational program began with discussions in January of 1987. Following several preliminary meetings with administrators from Ottumwa High School, the concept was explored January 22 with Dr. Carol Bradley, Jim Athen, Mavis Kelley and Charles Moench from the Department of Education. Discussion was held on submitting a proposal.

Shortly after finalizing grant application details on February 9, the scope of cooperation widened to include the Southern Prairie Area Education Agency (AEA) and six local school districts, contiguous to Ottumwa, as study participants.

Carol Bradley, Director of Instructional Services Division, Department of Education, first presented the idea to local superintendents on March 3. According to Dr. Bradley, Area 15 had been selected because over its history it had achieved an outstanding record and success rate when working with previous cooperative ventures (See Appendix F for "Cooperation is the Key" chronicle).

Recognizing past achievements in the area of cooperation, the State of Iowa approved and funded the Feasibility Study on May 7. Spanning two fiscal years, 5 May '87 through 30 June '88, the study was awarded an initial budget of $102,989 (See Appendix A for the initial budget).

The project was then presented to LEA (Local Education Agency) superintendents and the Local Advisory Committee in early June. Using a set of extensive transparencies, the purposes, objectives, time lines, and enrollment trends were addressed in a common meeting with area high school superintendents, Southern Prairie AEA and representatives of the LEA school boards.

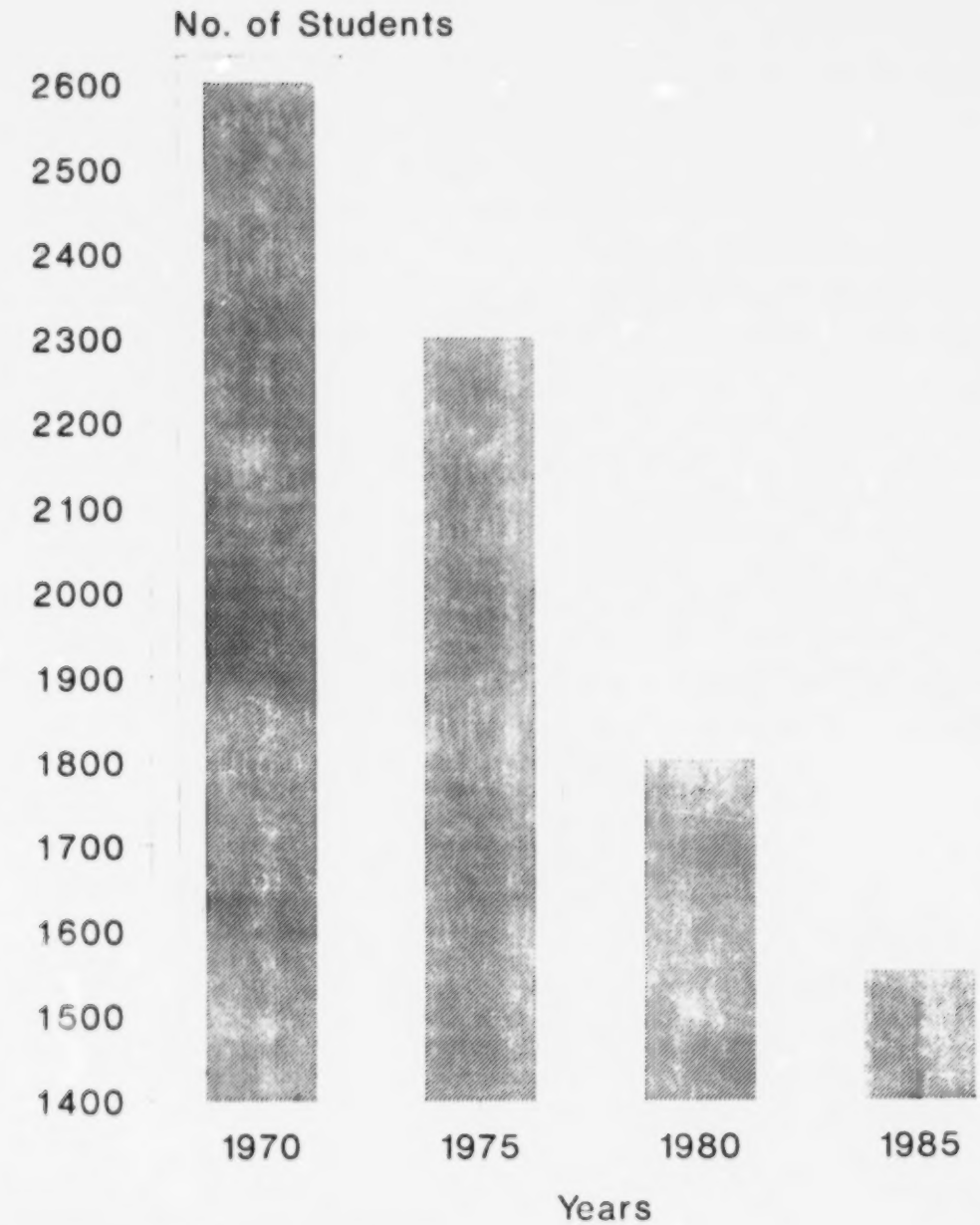
Enrollment declines as great as 40.6% over the last fifteen years were cited for Ottumwa with slightly lesser attrition for contiguous districts. As the census population in the Ottumwa area -- following state population trends -- decreased, secondary school enrollments declined at a significant rate in surrounding high schools. The presentation stressed societal changes and changing labor needs for the future. While 86% of America's work force does not need a baccalaureate degree to gain employment, high schools continue to emphasize a liberal arts or college preparatory curriculum leading toward a baccalaureate degree as if most students needed the baccalaureate degree for entry-level employment.

The following chart and graph were presented at the aforementioned June meeting and represent two different statistical comparisons. The first chart shows the federal population census data of Ottumwa during the years 1960, 1970 and 1980, emphasizing a marked decline in population.

The graph which follows the chart gives enrollment comparisons and trends of Grades 9-12 for Ottumwa Community School District (1970-1986). This type of data was presented for each of the participating schools and was instrumental in shaping behaviors and attitudes.

FEDERAL POPULATION CENSUS DATA CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA	
Year	Number
1960	33,871
1970	29,610
1980	27,381

Enrollment Comparison of Grades 9-12
Ottumwa Community School District



Ottumwa: 40.6% Decline

Three faculty and administration representatives, from both Ottumwa High School and Indian Hills Community College, took a successful and informative trip to Ohio State National Center (mid June) for a review of available literature, planning, brainstorming and discussion. Group recommendations presented key points of consensus and detailed a specific proposal for a cooperative vocational curriculum. Existing Ottumwa High School courses would be regrouped to fit the state vocational cluster concept and would be presented to others as a model. This model would be a beginning discussion point.

The study was presented June 15 to a joint meeting of superintendents, board members, AEA, and Local Advisory Council members. During this meeting the financial implications, a report from the Ohio State retreat, and a proposal of curriculum needs were addressed. The initial curriculum thrust, "Quality of Work Life Skills," received unanimous approval. Recommendations from the Ohio retreat, in draft form, were unanimously endorsed at the meeting. Unfortunately, despite the success of the visit, smaller area schools had not been included in constructing the model, which politically, proved to be a problem.

The Council of Principals met for the first time on July 18 concerning the project. Principals voiced a concern that the project was moving forward too rapidly, that we were already setting time lines and talking about implementation of shared programs when the focus was on feasibility.

Status of the project was shared with the LEA superintendents at their monthly meeting on September 8.

The Council of Principals held their second meeting September 14. They were asked to share the project information with their faculty. The timing, however, proved awkward with most of the principals seemingly more interested in getting school started. Four of the them were beginning their first principalship at new schools. Communication with faculty was minimal.

In late September, copies of The Neglected Majority by

Dale Parnell were given to superintendents, principals, and board members, in addition to representatives from the Department of Education. The book details the dilemma of today's secondary and post-secondary studies, and has been a guiding resource to the project. Parnell discusses the 2nd and 3rd quartile of students and how education should be preparing them for today's work force.

The project was shared with the Indian Hills Community College Instructional Council membership September 16 to gain necessary college support and feedback.

The Council of Principals again met September 30 with local LEA faculty in regard to the project. Teachers flatly rejected the project for several emphatic reasons. They felt they had limited ownership in the project. What was proposed as a feasibility study was now seen as an operational study. But most importantly, the teachers viewed the entire project as an effort by the state to force school consolidation. Even though principals had agreed to visit individually with each teacher attending from their school on the study and the "Quality of Work Life" curricula, it was apparent that they had not done so. The result was a very uninformed and negative attitude toward the project on behalf most of those teachers who attended.

October 5 Ike Ryan began as project coordinator, at which time the staff reviewed what had occurred and began a new approach. Ryan met with LEA superintendents and principals on an individual basis to get their concerns and discover what they were looking for in the project. Ike Ryan talked to all superintendents and knew they were planning vocational program expansion. He suggested they all get together; that each should not attempt to build all programs in all schools. Schools could provide better programs with the same money if they each had separate emphases, but cooperated with each other.

Superintendents were asked to bring information concerning the use of their facilities to a future meeting. Some

discovered they didn't really have facilities that would work. The result was that Fremont went to whole-grade sharing with Eddyville, while Blakesburg went to cafeteria-plan sharing with Eddyville for grades eleven and twelve. All agreed that Eddyville would use the tuition money to upgrade and expand its vocational programs.

Initially, Ottumwa offered to be the regional center for the cooperative venture. The smaller schools, however, were not in favor of such a concept.

October 29 and 30 the first Third-Party Evaluation was held. Evaluation participants represented the: Area Education Agency Administrators Association; Iowa Association of School Boards; Iowa Curriculum Assistance Systems; Iowa Merged Area Schools Vocational Deans and Directors' Association; Iowa State Education Association; Iowa Vocational Association; School Administrators of Iowa; and Vocational Education Council. Evaluators were charged with the responsibility of reviewing the study, performing on-site visitation of administration and staff, and holding group discussions with representatives of the agencies sponsoring the study and the study staff. For further information on the Third-Party Evaluations see Appendix E.

Dr. Carol Bradley and Dr. Phyllis Herriage of the Department of Education challenged the project staff: to see what could be done, identify problems, how or why they were or were not solved, and finally, provide the state with a model.

The study was presented and evaluators spent half of a day with local school districts reviewing local vocational programs. It became apparent that three of the seven school districts were not interested in further involvement. The first was not willing to put in the time. The second felt that they were large enough already; they didn't need any help. And the third would not be involved in improving its vocational curriculum unless they were mandated by the state.

Thus, on November 9, the decision was made to place these three school districts on an inactive status.

A meeting on November 12 joined together the remaining school districts: Fremont, Blakesburg, Ottumwa and Eddyville.

Discussion regarding planning vocational programs for fiscal 1989 occurred with the active district administrators on December 1. The following day an invitation was extended to Pekin school to become a member of the study in accordance with their request. A complete listing of the participating school districts and their administrators appears in Appendix C.

The study was presented to the Advisory Committee on December 7. Concern was expressed to have something operative by Fall 1988, so that we not have "another study on the shelf".

Confirmation was received from the Department of Education December 14 on approval of two pilot programs to be run in Applied Mathematics (Chariton and Eddyville).

January 7, 1988 a significant meeting was held with study staff and members of the Department of Education. The meeting was extremely positive. A midyear report on study activities was presented to Dr. Carol Bradley and Dr. Phyllis Herriage, with responses from the local school districts. Descriptions of what had been accomplished for each of the initial study objectives were reviewed.

Project staff, Dr. Phyllis Herriage, members of the bureau staff and Thomas Glenn, member of the State Board of Education, all participated. Career Education consultants were acquainted with the purpose, assumptions of the study, activities involved, and how they were implemented with the resulting attitude changes in the schools.

February 3 a meeting was set with the Department Chairs of the college. The outcome of the meeting indicated the issue of "turfdom" was also felt within the college.

February 8 project staff and the Indian Hills Department Chairs planned a tour of the Indian Hills campus for superintendents of Blakesburg, Eddyville and Fremont and the principal of Eddyville.

February 18 three local administrators and Ike Ryan participated in a tour of Indian Hills Community College

facilities, with the group coming away very favorably impressed with the college and what it has to offer.

Project staff had phone conversations March 3 with Cassy Jordan of CORD and with Jack Shupe, Eddyville Principal. Arrangements were made for Jack Shupe to participate on a panel at the Applied Mathematics Consortium in Dallas, Texas on March 19.

Lyle Hellyer, Steve Poort, Chuck Lawson and Ike Ryan met March 17 with the State Job Training Coordinating Council and the State Council on Vocational Education to discuss the study.

Meetings March 29 and 30 included Superintendents and IHCC Department Chairs, respectively, to discuss 1988-89 goals.

The second Third-Party Evaluation was held April 14 and 15, 1988. It was equally positive and encouraging.

Ike Ryan and Steve Poort met April 18 with Dr. Phyllis Herriage of the Department of Education to discuss the future of the project and the possibilities of continued state-level funding. The Department of Education made a financial commitment for FY'89; this time it was on a reduced, but significant level.

Arrangements were made April 20 for Jack Shupe and Tim Dose to visit Reeds Spring Voc Tech Center in Springfield, Missouri, April 28. Reeds Spring Center has a similar operation to those concepts sought through this study.

On April 25, minutes of the April 14-15 Third-Party Evaluation were mailed to evaluators.

A report on the Feasibility Study was presented May 10 by Ike Ryan to the Indian Hills Community College Board of Directors.

THE PROCESS

A critical piece in the process of carrying out the study was to establish rapport with participating schools and administrators. In doing so, every effort was made not to point out weaknesses in existing programs. Instead, enthusiasm was shown for what a cooperative program could do for their students. Administrators were encouraged to focus on the students and what can be done in their best interest.

The first step of the process required getting the support of each superintendent and each board. The project was presented to board of education representatives, emphasizing the benefits of a cooperative vocational program, regardless of its location. Once accomplished, the study coordinator and each superintendent, in concert, had to gain the support of each principal. Earning the backing of the teachers that were to be involved represented the next step in the process. These individuals must be carefully selected, due in large part to the fact that faculty represents the largest certified body of personnel in the program. Attempts to promote cooperation, however, focused firmly on the benefits of cooperation to the student.

It was necessary to get faculty selected from the various schools together in a free and open atmosphere in order to open up dialogue. Care was taken by the study coordinator to gain permission from each superintendent prior to contacting any of the faculty members at the building level. What would high school staff like to do? What are they going to do? What are the possibilities? It was strategically important not to have a program outlined before these individuals discussed it with their boards. There was no written "game plan" to follow in conducting the study. The process utilized emanated from the experiential judgment of the project staff tempered with constant feedback from LEA personnel.

Respective roles of participating agencies were seen to evolve into an even sharper focus throughout the conduct of the

study. The open-ended, non-judgmental process followed greatly facilitated progress in role definition.

The process followed was one that built upon existing strengths in a manner so as not to duplicate efforts of either the school district, Southern Prairie AEA, or the college.

There were several successes and failures in the process. The first failure occurred in the planning stages of the Ohio State retreat. Only through hindsight was it realized that the smaller schools had neither been invited nor involved in the trip to Ohio State.

Following the retreat, a second unforeseen failure surfaced. A six cluster model was proposed as a place to start. It was merely a suggestion, an umbrella framework showing six clusters and how they fit into Ottumwa's existing courses. Despite the fact that the model was presented as only a proposal, a shell with which to build or rebuild, the smaller schools would not accept it. Indian Hills and Ottumwa High School in combination posed a threat to them. They saw this as both entities on behalf the state dictating to them, and felt the study was moving too quickly.

METHODOLOGY

There was no written, systematic plan for the methodology of the project. The success of the project was due in large part to elements of pragmatism, common sense, extensive administrative experience and a stated willingness on behalf of some participating schools to explore new approaches.

The project allowed participants to maintain their own identity as well as develop cooperative relationships. Individual meetings, an integral component, were held at convenient times for the participants in their administrative offices. Teachers were paid extra for their time spent with the program; administrators were not. Schools not interested in exploring cooperative relationships were deliberately dropped.

Through the Third-Party Evaluation, suggested by the state, key state leaders received needed exposure to vital issues on the local level. Through the evaluation, the state, the evaluators and participating schools all were able to become actively involved in the study. Evaluators were able to gain valuable insights on behalf their respective organizations.

The research retreat to Ohio State National Center was a successful attempt to gather literature, plan, discuss, brainstorm and, at the same time, build friendships among faculty and administration from the college and Ottumwa High School. A sample of faculty responses can be seen in Appendix D.

The study succeeded in creating a climate for change through: a videotape of Bernard Donovan (Secretary of Labor); information regarding societal and educational trends, demographic/enrollment patterns of participating schools, and; The Neglected Majority, by Dale Parnell (copies were given to each participant). These not only emphasized the need for change, but also provided the proper attitudinal environment in which it might occur and succeed.

The study wished neither to support nor oppose issues for agreement. Rather, it chose to not be a participant when individual schools discussed formalizing agreements, mergers, shared superintendents, etc. This alleviated the possibility for misinterpretation. Interestingly enough, after the agreements had been formalized, two superintendents expressed that they wished project staff had been involved; invitations from the districts involved were never issued, however.

The tour of the Indian Hills campus, offered to local faculty and administration, was an outward attempt to expose those individuals to IHCC and technical education at the college level, and open up an understanding of the facilities and its opportunities. This step, although viewed as unnecessary by a few, was judged extremely valuable by local superintendents.

BARRIERS TO COOPERATION

This study faced numerous barriers to cooperation from school districts, administrators, faculty, geography, declining enrollments, transportation and limited funding.

Concern was expressed regarding the college's close cooperation with Ottumwa High School, and the inference that a regional vocational school would appear. This invoked fear that the larger organizations would be telling the smaller ones what to do, further appearing to say, "You're not doing a good job."

The greatest thing the study had to overcome was when there wasn't something to easily identify, schools would perceive a hidden agenda. In spite of being told by college personnel that the better a vocational program is, the better it reflects on the student, both high school and the college, schools had difficulty believing that the college was there to help the school help themselves. High schools began to recognize that the level of vocational opportunity available for secondary students was insufficient. In essence, this program offers a "win-win" situation, if personnel involved can only conceptualize it. Schools naturally tend to be protective of their turf. It seems more important for their students to remain at their campus -- an effort to keep a shrinking enrollment intact -- than to admit that a cooperative sharing program is more advantageous and holds more opportunities for the students. Sending students away becomes an issue of time and distance; schools fear that they will be "eaten up" by a larger school like Ottumwa.

Closely tied with that is an artificial barrier which says, "Those students are somehow different than ours. The students couldn't possibly get along." A sharing program like Eddyville is demonstrative to the contrary; students are resilient, able to adapt and create a new and rewarding atmosphere for learning. In an effort to combat the problem of time and distance when scheduling students at another school, every attempt was made to spend only half-days away.

An unfortunate barrier occurred when the "Quality of Work Life Skills" thrust was introduced. Even though told they would teach the content themselves in their own schools, and be involved in content determination, teachers failed, or were too threatened, to listen properly. A threat was seen by the teachers and caused negative feelings toward the project. There was not a sense of ownership for them; they felt they had not been involved in the decision making. Ownership is a critical element in any situation involving change. Given a sense of ownership, the participants are more apt to perceive that the idea belongs to themselves and their colleagues. Once they feel ownership the cooperative program is more likely to become a change they wish to make, rather than one they have to make. This problem required a review and readjustment by the study staff. Personal meetings with superintendents proved highly successful. Getting administrators together to talk about their inadequate facilities and what they would like to see happen was the first step in curbing these barriers. Attitude is the key to cooperation. Behavior modification was used extensively in the study. Behavioral modification occurred as study staff pursued the individuals in small group meetings. Discussions among the schools brought the level of cooperation beyond vocational curriculum.

One school, for instance, was interested in health occupations. After looking into what they would need and how it would fit in, they realized their facilities were not adequate. This example demonstrates the study's proficient use of the "soft philosophy". By allowing the school to come to a rather obvious conclusion, they did step forward and admit their facilities were inadequate. It was far more advantageous and strategically effective for the school to admit this, than for the project staff to tell them. Open dialogue with other schools facilitated reaching a common ground, which eventually leads to cooperation.

Comments from two different principals merit noting. They give a vivid account of barriers to change. The first said, "Frankly, I'm not going to cooperate until I absolutely have to. I'm just going to wait and see whether the state standards force me to." Another principal stated, "I know from talking to my superintendent and board members that unless buses bring students to our school, we won't cooperate. We're certainly not loading up any of our students on our buses and taking them someplace else." The first exhibits a lack of concern for student needs and the second, a one-sided view of cooperation.

A barrier to cooperation existed among various counselors and administrators in their perceived role of vocational education. Some felt it required little ability and little training. "Students unable to handle difficult academic courses at the school are to be scheduled into shop classes," seemed to be an attitude still with us. This attitude, unfortunately, is an age-old one; it badly needs readjustment to reflect the challenge ahead for America's work force. High school counselors were thought to be ill-prepared by traditional counselor education baccalaureate programs to counsel and/or provide proper guidance to students seeking vocational opportunities.

Not having a concrete "game plan" was disconcerting to some participants who would have been much more comfortable if step one led directly to step two, and so forth. This seemed particularly true when cooperation in meeting state standards no longer became the focus of the study.

Lastly, the very words "feasibility" and "study" became barriers in that it was readily determined that cooperation was feasible. What do you do then? And the word "study" implied an academic exercise. Once the study became operational, and no longer academic, perceptions had to be changed.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

* Participating schools have an increased awareness of those opportunities available in the changing world of work and technology. This increased awareness has created changes in traditional vocational education programs being considered and/or offered.

* Students have an increased awareness of the background needed to enter post-secondary vocational education, as well as the need to increase their proficiency in basic skills.

* Schools and students have been given a better idea of the exit level necessary for students to be gainfully employed in the work place, if they are to be employed above minimum wage.

* LEA administrators' lack of knowledge of what vocational opportunities are available to them, right at their local community college, has been corrected.

* The study stressed the increased need for guidance counselors to counsel on vocational education per se, in addition to liberal arts. That assistance currently provided students in seeking careers and the preparation of high school guidance counselors both appear inadequate.

* Outgrowths of this study are agreement that: (1) high school vocational education should remain of a general nature; (2) skilled training and/or preparation for actual employment should be reserved for the community college; and (3) Southern Prairie AEA has a valuable role to perform in in-servicing the professional development of all participants.

* Blakesburg, Eddyville and Fremont decided to pool their resources in cooperative programs: Fremont, whole-grade sharing with Eddyville; and Blakesburg, class by class, depending upon curriculum and faculty.

* Blakesburg and Ottumwa high schools will be sharing a vocational agriculture teacher in the fall of 1988. This represents the first time vocational agriculture has been taught for many years at Ottumwa High School, and the first cooperative arrangement in recent years by Ottumwa High School with one of its neighbors.

* Indian Hills assisted Ottumwa High School (OHS) by building a functioning lathe by using parts from two non-functioning OHS lathes. Labor from the college was donated with OHS paying for the required new parts.

ANALYSIS OF THE ASSUMPTIONS

The original six assumptions for the project encountered varying outcomes from no change to becoming null and void. Assumptions one, two and three were found valid throughout the project. The fourth assumption changed as a result of action taken by the State Department of Education in concert with state board members and the Governor's office; this, in effect, made the assumption null and void for the present time. In regard to assumption five, it was felt that the project was not yet at a point to involve parents and students. Exploration of the sixth assumption resulted in delineation between the high school and the community college regarding their roles in vocational education. High schools taught vocational clusters of basic skills, whereas community colleges focused upon technical skills and employment. AEA's were seen to deliver valuable contributions in in-servicing the continued professional development of administrators and counselors.

SUMMARY

On June 8, 1988 a meeting was held with those participating school districts wishing to further develop a cooperative vocational program at a common regional site for FY'89. Discussion centered on Eddyville as the regional site, with Fremont and Blakesburg interested in a common curriculum. An articulated vocational program, beginning at the junior-high level would extend through high school to Indian Hills Community College. Exploration of a baccalaureate degree in technologies from perhaps the University of Northern Iowa might be possible within two more years. Advanced standing/placement for high school students entering Indian Hills was seen as desirable. Competency-based curricula were seen to be offered throughout grades 10-14, with high school juniors and seniors attending vocational classes cooperatively with Indian Hills Community College. Technical training and placement were seen to occur through the college.

In looking back upon a most positive and interesting year (See Appendix G for newspaper clippings), all participants expressed their pleasure with the study and encouraged its contribution in FY'89.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT BUDGET

BUDGET

CONDUCT A STATEWIDE FEASIBILITY STUDY
ON THE ISSUES FACED WHEN COOPERATION OCCURS
BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOLS AND MERGED AREA SCHOOLS IN
SHARING A COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM AT A REGIONAL SITE

Fiscal Agent, Indian Hills Community College

EXPENDITURES	FY'87	FY'88
PERSONNEL		
Project Coordinator (FY'87-1.5 months @ $2500/month + fringe) (FY'88-12 months @ $2625/month + fringe*)	$ 4,500	$37,800
Instructional Staff (FY'87-100 hours @ $16.00/hour + fringe) (FY'88-1,000 hours @ $16.00/hour + fringe)	1,714	17,144
Secretary (FY'87-1.5 months @ $864/month + fringe) (FY'88-12 months @ $908/month + fringe*)	1,555	13,076
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	300	500
PRINTING SERVICES	200	1,500
TRAVEL	3,000	4,000
GROUP MEETING EXPENSES	1,000	1,500
CONSULTANTS	800	1,600
LIBRARY MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	300	2,000
LEGAL FEES		500
INFORMATION SYSTEM (Design and Install a Communication System**)		10,000
TOTALS	$13,369	$89,620

****

*Projected with a five percent salary increase for fiscal year 88.

**This system would include a complete microcomputer system with hard disk and a communication's link from Ottumwa High School to the mainframe computer at Indian Hills Community College.

APPENDIX B

PROJECT STAFF

PROJECT STAFF

Project Director: Dr. Stephen M. Poort

Steve has spent over twenty-five years in education, with the last twenty years being in the community colleges at an administrative level. His past positions include: Assistant Superintendent, Dean of Academic Affairs, and Vice President of Instruction. He is currently serving as Vice President of Instruction/Administration for Indian Hills Community College.

Project Coordinator: Mr. Ira "Ike" Ryan

With over 36 years in education, Ike is a recently retired superintendent of schools from the Eddyville School District. Ike came to the study with extensive background in secondary education and administration, a talent for working with people, as well as extensive knowledge of the geographical area to be served.

Assistant to the Director: Mr. Lee Pulis

Lee is an experienced Lead Instructor at Indian Hills Community College in areas such as technical communications, human relations, electronics, math and applied physics. He was responsible for leading the development of a cooperative secondary/post-secondary PT/UTC physics lab and personal computer lab.

Project Secretary: Mrs. Sandra Wilson

Sandy has seventeen years experience in clerical and support roles, and is experienced in areas such as bookkeeping, correspondence, mail distribution, typing, word processing and proofreading.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADMINISTRATORS

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS, ADMINISTRATION AND BOARD MEMBER

Blakesburg Community School District

Bob Hull, Superintendent
Chris Duree, High School Principal
Connie Replogle, Board Member

Eddyville Community School District

Tim Dose, Superintendent
John Shupe, High School Principal
Ron Shafer, Board Member

Fremont Community School District

Randy McCaulley, Superintendent
Doug Engleart, High School Principal
Neal Brown, Board Member

Ottumwa Community School District

Richard Geith, Superintendent
Edward Kuntz, High School Principal
Dave Harris, Board Member

Pekin Community School District

James Rood, Superintendent
Joe Morgan, High School Principal

APPENDIX D

FACULTY RESPONSE TO OHIO STATE TRIP

OTTUMWA HIGH SCHOOL
501 E. Second
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501

June 25, 1987

Dr. Steve Poort, Ph.D.
Indian Hills Community College
2622 Clearview
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501

Dear Steve:

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the statewide feasibility study team that went to do research at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education from June 15-18, 1987.

This proved to be a very worthwhile experience for the following reasons:

1. opportunity to research the role of vocational education in the secondary school at a national center that has what seems unlimited resources.

2. chance to gain a better understanding of the purpose and need for this project by review of national research.

3. opportunity to discuss research and topics with secondary and post-secondary staff and administration.

4. allowed time to concentrate on the role of vocational education in the secondary school.

5. opportunity to articulate with the post-secondary team.

6. feeling of accomplishing something good for the students enrolled in vocational education in our area and Iowa.

Sincerely,

Ron Langgin

Ron Langgin
Electronics Instructor

APPENDIX E

THIRD-PARTY EVALUATIONS

EVALUATION MEETING

of

A STATEWIDE FEASIBILITY STUDY

ON THE ISSUES FACED WHEN COOPERATION OCCURS

BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOLS AND MERGED AREA SCHOOLS IN

SHARING A COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM AT A REGIONAL SITE

Thursday, October 29, 1987

PARTICIPANTS:
Evaluators: Area Education Agency Administrators Association, Charles Irwin; Iowa Association of School Boards, Marilyn Perkins; Iowa Curriculum Assistance Systems, Dr. John Van Ast; Iowa Merged Area Schools (MAS) Vocational Deans and Directors Association, Bill Walker; Iowa State Education Association, Lowell Dauenbaugh; Iowa Vocational Association (not represented); School Administrators of Iowa, Robert Blasi; Vocational Education Council, William Bergfeld and Patricia Crawford

Study project originators: Dr. Lyle Hellyer, President, Indian Hills Community College (IHCC); Don Roseberry, Administrator, Southern Prairie AEA; Dick Geith, Superintendent, Ottumwa Community Schools; Dr. Carol Bradley, Administrator, Division of Instructional Services, Department of Education (DE); Phyllis Herriage, Chief, Bureau of Career Education, DE

Project development personnel: Ed Kuntz, Principal, Ottumwa High School; Dan Ford, Trades Instructor, Ottumwa High School; Ron Langgin, Electricity and Electronics Instructor, Ottumwa High School; John Schoolen, Machine Trades Instructor, IHCC

Other involved personnel: Lee Pulis, Instructor, High Technology, IHCC; Dallas Dorsey, Department Chair, Trades and Industries, IHCC; Bob Allison, Department Chair, Business Tech, IHCC; Ann Aulwes, Department Chair, Health Occupations, IHCC;

Study staff: Steve Poort, Director; Ike Ryan, Study Coordinator; Lee Pulis, Study Assistant; Sandy Wilson, Study Secretary

INTRODUCTIONS: The meeting was called to order at 1:05 P.M. All participants present introduced themselves and identified the agency they represented. The purpose of the meeting was reviewed with participants as follows: to provide an external evaluation of "A Statewide Feasibility Study on the Issues Faced when Cooperation Occurs Between High Schools and Merged Area Schools in Sharing a Comprehensive Vocational Program at a Regional Site" hereinafter referred to as the "study." The evaluators were charged with the responsibility of examining the

study, evaluation of the study through on-site visitation of administration and staff of participating local districts, and through group discussion with representatives of the agencies sponsoring the study and the study staff. The evaluators were asked to assess progress on the study to date and to make recommendations that would give direction to the study staff as the study continues.

REVIEW OF STUDY: The director gave a brief overview of the study. The Department of Education (DE) recognized a need to study the feasibility of local K-12 districts cooperating with a MAS in the delivery of vocational programs to area students. The DE recognized the success of past cooperative programs in Area XV and authorized a pilot feasibility study to include IHCC, Ottumwa Community School district and the six K-12 districts contiguous to the Ottumwa Community School district. It was noted that Iowa leads the nation in out-migration of its residents. Declining enrollment, limited resources, the high cost of vocational programs, the lack of geographic access, and the demographic profile make equality of opportunity for Iowa students in vocational and technical curriculum extremely difficult or impossible for local districts to deliver singularly and independent of each other. The study investigates the potential for equitable delivery of vo-tech options to all students through cooperative programs between local districts and between local districts and the MAS. This cooperative venture could provide improved vo-tech offerings while reducing per pupil cost of vocational programs and help the local districts meet the proposed state education standards for the approval of local K-12 school districts. The evaluators and study participants were encouraged to read The Neglected Majority by Dale Parnell and copies were made available to those who wanted one. A written synopsis of progress on the study to date was presented to the evaluation team for their information.

PANEL #1: A panel of five members, representing the organizations who originated the study, made presentations and answered questions directed to them by the evaluation team.

Dr. Lyle Hellyer, President, IHCC, noted that IHCC, Area XV and the constituent local districts have a long history of success in cooperative ventures recognized across Iowa. The prevailing cooperative attitude is the result of high respect held for each other and their respective roles. There is a strong desire among the study participants to do something for the students. Students in the study area do not have vocational opportunities equal to those found in other areas of the United States where students have exposure to potential employment and training programs. There is a need in the study area to develop programs that would improve attitude and intensity of interest in vo-tech programs among students. Concern was expressed that "By the year 1990 any person who is not specifically trained for a certain job could not enter the labor market above minimum wage." It was pointed out that two of the largest recent industrial capital investments in Iowa are located in this study area. These industries are operating with a minimum number of employees, approximately one highly skilled employee per

$1,000,000 capital investment. There will be jobs for those who are trained.

Dr. Carol Bradley, Administrator, Division of Instructional Services, DE, and Phyllis Herriage, Chief, Bureau of Career Education, DE, stated that the Department of Education is funding this study to identify problems, how each problem was solved or why it was not solved; to find out what works and what doesn't work when cooperation occurs between K-12 school districts and a MAS. Many college enrollments are declining and budgets are constricted. The college prep curriculum is not appropriate for everyone. The mindset that "read, write, and think" are all that we need to give students is now passe. Students exiting our educational institutions must have a skill if they are to enter the job market competitively and above the minimum wage level. Opportunities for vocational exploration in rural Iowa are very meager. The goal of the state is to meet the needs of the students by improved quality and expanded opportunities in vocational education. Perhaps we have lost sight of that goal. The feasibility study is charged with designing a system to accomplish the goal rather than for each school district to protect their own territory. Cooperative programs have the potential to reach that goal. (Definition: "Cooperation is an unnatural act among unconsenting adults.")

AEA Administrator, Don Roseberry, stated, "The AEA is excited and enthusiastic about being involved in this project." Two of the agency's functions are service and leadership. They can provide service through staff development and in-service training and provide leadership by promoting an interest in regionalism. This promotes financial savings, more efficient delivery systems, improvement in quality of programs for kids, and helping schools meet minimum standards.

Ottumwa Community Schools Superintendent Dick Geith related Ottumwa's interest in the study. Ottumwa is a large school with one of the best K-12 vocational programs in the state; they feel they do not have to worry about meeting minimum standards. Being number one in the state is not good enough when there is potential for improving educational opportunity for students through cooperative programs. Vocational education is expensive. It is time that local districts examine their vo-tech programs and see if the most efficient use of the budget dollar is being made. Superintendent Geith stated, "Ottumwa as a school district has no desire to absorb surrounding districts, has no selfish or ulterior motives, but we do want to work cooperatively to improve the quality of programs for all students."

EVALUATOR CONCERNS AND COMMENTS: (1) Eliminate the stigma of "voc. ed. students." Curriculum offerings should not distinguish between college prep and vo-tech education. (2) Teach the basics so that the student realizes their importance in employability and seeks to be educated to full potential. (3) Improve student awareness of occupational opportunities. Technology is leaving the sunbelt and coming back to the midwest; our students need to be prepared. We

develop students' skills and they migrate to other states -- better that they migrate trained than stay as a tax burden. There is a willingness to pay for education. A supply of trained people in High Tech skills may attract High Tech companies to provide jobs.

PANEL #2: Ann Aulwes, Department Chair, Health Occupations, IHCC; Bob Allison, Department Chair, Business Tech, IHCC; Dallas Dorsey, Department Chair, Trades and Industries, IHCC; and Ed Kuntz, Principal, Ottumwa High School.

Ed Kuntz -- Local K-12 districts are hurting on equipment -- sharing among school districts makes equipment expenditures more feasible. What is the most economical delivery system? It is not practical to ship all kids to a new site when there are existing programs in local school districts that can be shared. There needs to be a beginning course for all students, "Quality of Work Life" (QWL). QWL includes decision making, communication skills, reading and writing skills, how to apply and interview for a job, understanding the individual's role in business and understanding basic economics. There is a problem in fitting this course into the curriculum because it is too broad and includes too many things to attract students. There is a need to give opportunities at lower grade levels to look at vo-tech course offerings. In-service is needed for traditional academic counselors to acquaint them with opportunities and skill requirements for employment in the High Tech age. Teacher training programs do not seem to be preparing counselors adequately for counseling in the vocational field. People skills and communication skills need emphasis and need to be made relevant to employment possibilities.

Ann Aulwes -- There is a proliferation of jobs available in health care. It is important that components of a variety of health occupations be offered. A curriculum designed to promote the "ladder effect" is desirable. Nurses aide programs are being offered at the secondary level. A problem at the secondary level is a lack of maturity in the students.

Bob Allison -- It is important that vocational education not be considered a "blue collar" education. It is important to maintain an attitude of exploration at the secondary level with exit opportunities for those who seek employment right out of high school.

Dallas Dorsey -- Paperwork frustrates local school district administrators when implementing vocational programs. Advantages are seen to coordinating courses through IHCC so that local districts can allow students to enroll in IHCC programs for high school credit. IHCC currently has 137 high school students enrolled in cooperative vocational programs.

EVALUATOR CONCERNS AND COMMENTS: What about the need for job-specific training at the secondary level? When you broaden the base with greater emphasis on exploration -- where's the focus? The goal is to develop a model program in the state -- will a graduate of this program be ready to enter the job market

or be given direction and placed in a suitable program? Will the student be able to identify and prepare for career goals? Will students receive dual credit -- high school and college? What certification will be required for the secondary teacher to teach these courses? Do current certification policies constitute a road block? Listen to business -- they are spending more and more for job upgrading. Present programs train too many women for minimum wage jobs.

PANEL #3: John Schoolen, Instructor, Machine Trades, IHCC; Ron Langgin, Instructor, Electricity and Electronics, Ottumwa High School; Dan Ford, Instructor, Trades, Ottumwa High School.

These panel members were participants on a Feasibility Study team that went to the National Center for Vocational Education and Research at Ohio State University to research this type of vocational program. They found that a lot of the problems were addressed, but not many solutions provided. The trip was a positive sharing experience for the high school and college teachers and administrators. The panel reflected a strong belief that secondary programs should be basically exploratory rather than job-specific. Some programs at the secondary level do provide advanced courses, which is desirable to help the students see what the field is really like. Articulation of program curricula between secondary schools and the community college is important. An articulation study was conducted between 1982 and 1984 wherein six vocational fields were articulated in Area XV between high schools and the community college. Courses in these vocational programs do have carry-over value into liberal arts and professional programs. A major opportunity for this study will be to address the development of a Quality of Work Life curriculum. Research affirms that the vocational student is a visual learner and has a high level of mechanical aptitude. Providing the student with opportunity to develop these talents results in: increased positive attitude, positive attendance, and a positive self concept. QWL programs need to be developed at the teacher level to provide ownership for implementation.

EVALUATION MEETING

of

A STATEWIDE FEASIBILITY STUDY

ON THE ISSUES FACED WHEN COOPERATION OCCURS

BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOLS AND MERGED AREA SCHOOLS IN

SHARING A COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM AT A REGIONAL SITE

Friday, October 30, 1987

Following on-site visits to area high schools by the evaluation team, team members provided feedback on the structured evaluation questions.

1. What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of participating in this program?

   Advantages: Use the expertise of the IHCC staff to do a better job of relating the information to the student. IHCC staff and local district instructors could work together more closely. Expanded course offerings could be provided to include a QWL program.

   Disadvantages: Cooperative programs would require transportation of students. Transportation requires time and the use of time affects scheduling. Coordination of schedules between cooperating schools can present a problem. Moving students out of a school district with a potential loss of instructional time contributes to faculty apprehension. Secondary staff were concerned that students will be transported out of their district with very little or no students coming to them. Some concern was expressed that we are pointing toward a regional vo-tech high school, if not now, at some point down the line. Local district patrons have not been prepared for this type of change.

2. What do you consider to be the major obstacles?

   Transportation, schedule coordination, teacher apprehension, determination of philosophy, the perception that it is a move toward reorganization, local district apprehension about the students going out of their district and none coming in, inadequate information about the study at the local district level, paranoia about an external authority calling the shots.

There is a need for greater involvement of the principals in planning and developing programs. There is a question about the amount of time allocated for the study; this question lends itself to concern that feasibility could subtly change to implementation. Local teachers were concerned about meeting vocational certification standards for programs to be implemented. Fear that rural schools will be absorbed by their urban neighbors continues to exist; the term of this study is probably not adequate to remove those fears from their patrons and faculties. The need to convince local school districts that students are the winners, not the community college nor the AEA, continues to persist.

3. How do you perceive the roles of AEA, the community college and DE as contributors to the program?

The AEA role is staff in-service, curriculum development.

There is a need for the DE to prepare a written statement clarifying certification requirements and cooperate with the AEA in arranging meetings to convey this information to teachers. The DE needs to reinforce the fact that vocational requirements establish eligibility for reimbursement (state and federal vocational funds), not approval under the standards.

The commumnity college in cooperation with the AEA could provide training and teaching methods and perhaps course work leading toward vocational certification. Other community college contributions may include competency-based curricula, guest faculty, advice from private sector, and assistance in equipment selection.

There was an expressed need for all three organizations to work together to stimulate a percolation effect from teachers and principals to them, rather than a drip process from these organizations to the principals and teachers. The percolation process gives local district staff a greater feeling of ownership.

4. What are the implications for your local district Vocational Committee that may arise from this program?

Don't see much change; most meet now only because required by law.

5. If the vocational standards become a reality do you believe your local district will be able to meet them and receive approval?

Local school districts do not see a problem in meeting the standards. The value of this cooperative venture is not to be judged by the present ability of the local districts to meet the standards.

6. Do you see this program as a possible alternative to wholesale reorganization?

   No, but it has the potential to increase opportunities for kids. There is some fear that it could lead to an area vo-tech program and this could cause reorganization rather than provide an alternative. Reorganization will not solve the problems addressed by this study; there will still be a need for cooperative programs and we should proceed with our efforts to develop these programs within participating schools.

7. What do you envision the school program in your district to be in 1993?

   Administrator responses do not indicate a clear perception of vocational programming in 1993; there are too many variables at this time.

   Needed programs that are cost prohibitive at the local level may be provided through a satellite delivery system.

   Curriculum will move in a more technical direction with attention being given to "hands on" basic skills.

8. Do you believe that our present students are well enough prepared (informed) to make intelligent decisions relative to continued training that would lead to entry level skills in the High Tech labor force of their time?

   Hedrick -- yes. All others -- no. All local districts were in agreement that their role should be a general curriculum preparing students to make career decisions with job-specific training to be delivered at the post-secondary level.

9. Will they be well prepared (informed) in 1993? - 2000?

   If this program goes, they will be better prepared and informed but adequacy is hard to define for 1993 and 2000.

10. If the standards were interpreted to be "occupational education studies" rather than "vocational education," do you see this program as an enrichment of opportunity for your students?

    Yes, we see this program as an enrichment opportunity, but it is important that the DE clarify in the standards the section relating to vocational education -- is it vocational education, or is it occupational education studies?

The DE has a very firm position on its interpretation of vocational education in the standards. The term "vocational education" is to be considered synonymous with "occupational education studies." The intent of the standards never did include the requirement that any course should be eligible for reimbursement from federal and state vocational funds. It is further stipulated that the state has no intention of establishing competency requirements for any "occupational studies" course.

11. Are you interested in cooperative course offerings that would provide your students more than the minimum standards?

General attitude positive. Explore providing aptitude tests and interest inventories. The issue is not survival but what are we going to offer and will it help students grow up, become good citizens, make more realistic career plans and will it expose students to programs that provide both skill and content driven curricula. Students need to know that they may choose their exit level but they also need to understand the career ladder concept.

12. Do you have any suggestions or comments that could make the program more effective?

Concentrate on uniform curriculum throughout the area. Consider complete satellite delivery system. Have more one-on-one meetings between study staff and local instructors. Provide more specific information on the plan to the local districts. Recognize that real social policy questions exist. Do we leave curriculum alone, knowing that high school grads will have minimum wage jobs with no training? Is the only successful high school grad the one that goes on to a four-year college? Explore moving teachers rather than students.

AGENCY REVIEW: Evaluating team was asked to what extent their agency wishes to be involved in the study and how they perceive their role.

ISEA -- would like to continue its involvement and to address teacher concerns. This project has great potential.

SAI -- the evaluator's personal feeling is yes he wants to stay involved, cannot speak for the agency, but would be willing to work with study coordinator to put something together to present to SAI.

Iowa MAS -- stay involved.

ICAS -- stay involved and provide assistance in identifying needed instructional materials.

AEA Administrators Association -- stay involved.

IASB -- stay involved.

VEC -- stay involved. Emphasize quality of programs and the other issues will fall in place. Perhaps the state may need to take a stronger stance in supporting this program. The VEC strongly supports the feasibility study and would support more studies throughout the state.

IVA -- not represented.

FEASIBILITY STUDY
THIRD PARTY EVALUATION
APRIL 14, 1988

Persons Present: Charles Irwin, Area Education Agency Administrators Association; Bill Walker, Iowa Merged Area Schools (MAS) Vocational Deans and Directors Association; Jan Huss, Consultant, Career Information System of Iowa, Department of Education; Lowell Dauenbaugh, Iowa State Education Association; Robert Blasi, School Administrators of Iowa; Marilyn Perkins, Iowa Association of School Boards; Doris Poindexter, Iowa Vocational Association; Steve Poort, Study Director; Ike Ryan, Study Coordinator; Linda Marshall, Secretary

Members of the evaluation team began arriving at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at 12:00 noon. As lunch progressed, Ike Ryan, Study Coordinator reviewed the study's progress since the fall 1987 visit by the evaluation team. Sample questions for the evaluation team to use were given the team by Ike Ryan, as well as emanating from team members themselves. Each member was assigned to a participating school with departure to that school made at 1:30 p.m. Members were to have their interviews completed and return by 4:00 p.m.

Ike Ryan called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He asked each member to report on the results of the evaluation from the districts.

1. Do you perceive any change in the advantages and disadvantages of program sharing since the evaluations 10/30/87?

   Blakesburg: No change since the 10/30/87 evaluation done. The interest is there, definitely sharing opportunities there. Have students in the Eddyville program now. Politically motivated. They feel strongly about the cluster type of program continuing to be pushed, important concept.

   Eddyville: Didn't get any indication of any change.

   Fremont: Did not indicate any changes.

   Ottumwa High School: He felt there had been a change and agreed with the pattern. Now have 18 going to IHCC. Felt there might be a little school, big school fear, fearing that Ottumwa would take over.

2. Do you have recommendation for change that might increase advantages or decrease disadvantages?

   Blakesburg: Same thinking, specialized center. Transportation might be a problem but felt it could be worked out. Would like to see meetings started up again.

   Eddyville: Would like to see more involvement of teaching staff from the beginning. Didn't have a good understanding of the program. Like to see more.

Fremont: Suggested they needed to be more specific about vocational programs and where. Get more specific. There has been more movement. Concerned about efforts benefiting Ottumwa only.

3. Did your participation in the study influence your thinking about sharing programs?

Blakesburg: Probably not to a great extent, opened up some dialogue. They mentioned they are going to share their agriculture program with Ottumwa.

Eddyville: Didn't think it changed. It is positive and continues to be.

Fremont: No. Had been sharing athletics with Hedrick but felt it was best to look around to improve programs was main concern. Feelings have simmered down.

4. Has your participation in the study and/or the work of the 1988 legislators increased or decreased your perceived need for sharing programs in the next five years?

Blakesburg: Probably not. The administration has always felt a great need. They feel districts are not ready to re-organize.

Eddyville: Not really. Sharing occurred because of perceived need of the districts. Official notification was three years ago from Fremont and Fremont met their need.

Fremont: Basically had from the standpoint of new standards. A problem in terms of providing vocational programs in the future. Their programs are not competitive enough for students. Incentives not a factor, sharing was sold on basis of educational betterment.

5. Do you think that the open enrollment rule, which allows parents to enroll their children in neighboring schools if the home school curriculum is inadequate, will increase program sharing?

Blakesburg: Not a lot of feeling on open enrollment. Something to evaluate more, better publicity needed. Will cause them to do some sharing.

Eddyville: Didn't have significant impact.

Fremont: Did not think so. Might cause schools to evaluate better and be more competitive.

Ottumwa High School: Yes, would be an increase in program sharing with open enrollment.

6. Do you anticipate an increase in Community College enrollment by your students?

Blakesburg: They have a higher percentage, but didn't link to Feasibility Study. They had positive things to say about IHCC.

Eddyville: They didn't have any statistics. They think there will be increased enrollment. Positive about IHCC.

Fremont: Wasn't sure. Probably would receive more students. Complimentary about IHCC Vocational Program. Felt IHCC is concerned.

Ottumwa High School: Yes, would be an increase in Community College enrollment and especially for the lower social economic guides.

7. Do you anticipate an effort being made to strengthen the relationships with Community Colleges particularly in articulating vocational courses?

Blakesburg: Yes, we have started to see strength.

Eddyville: This is one of his wishes; the college would help the schools develop in the areas.

Fremont: Expected continued emphasis on this. Problem sending to another district and not dealing with curriculum. Problem would be remedied if could get something concrete down.

Ottumwa High School: Yes, felt should start earlier than high school with vocational courses. He felt that it would be better for teachers to travel than the students.

8. Do you wish to see the study continue to include all other schools in Area XV and place a stronger emphasis on curriculum development to provide uniform basic background for vocational students?

Blakesburg: Definitely would like to see study continue, very interested and still studying. Felt there is a need for a laid out program, may be too general now. Not supportive of involving the Area Planning Council.

Eddyville: Yes, looks to see study continue. Places a strong emphasis on curriculum development. Interest in sharing was going to happen regardless. Felt it would help everyone. He needs help in developing vocational subjects. That was their weakness; together they could do something.

Fremont: Wanted study to continue. Didn't want to include other districts at this time. Could be a model for the rest of the state. Felt strongest emphasis on development.

9. Any further questions or comments?

The following comments were then shared.

Blakesburg: Feelings were positive. Like to see continued, ready to go.

Fremont: Certification, didn't know what could happen. Negative on legislative action. Emphasis on program.

Ottumwa: Five years down the road we should continue with the base we have now and develop more depth. He felt if we were involved with Area Planning Council we would go in wrong direction. More articulation in vocational subjects, after that spread base to other schools. Get good common curriculum base. Strongest advantage has been getting schools together to talk. He felt more positive than negative. He felt legislative talk had hurt, would delay things more than a year. Felt feasibility may be premature. In favor of continuing this study. Would like to think program will be waiting for him when it happens. He hoped they could gain from this, and felt nobody wanted to do business with them. Mentioned they are going to Blakesburg for their agriculture program. Also felt that anything that was put together would benefit them. Thinks it would have happened anyway and thought should be continued. He felt they could use it to boost classes that they were falling off in.

FEASIBILITY STUDY
THIRD PARTY EVALUATION
APRIL 15, 1988

Persons Present: Jack Shupe, Principal, Eddyville High School; Tim Dose, Superintendent, Eddyville Community Schools; Robert Blasi; Marilyn Perkins; Lowell Dauenbaugh; John Van Ast, Iowa Curriculum Assistance Systems; Charles Irwin; Bill Walker; Don Roseberry, Administrator, Southern Prairie AEA; Doris Poindexter; Jan Huss; Steve Poort; Ike Ryan; Diane Manning, Secretary

Ike Ryan opened with comments and introduced Jack Shupe, Principal of Eddyville High School, to speak so we could hear from the public school/student system.

Jack introduced himself and made statements concerning how he got started with the Feasibility Study in the area of "Applied Math." He stated, "The idea appeals to me because it lets students know why they're doing what they're doing." Jack gave a brief description of the Eddyville district and said that he felt that when a student left school they should be able to fit into a technical situation. Eddyville has done a study with 4th hour study hall students, including a 4.0 student and some that are not good math students. Both groups were interested in the study. He feels the field study is the way to go; it's working and that's the key. The bottom line is pulling concepts out and putting them in as supplemental units.

Jan Huss stated that the type of material being talked about was in modular form, competency-based curriculum material.

Don Roseberry asked the question of where all this fit in. Was it math, vocational, elective, or other?

Jack stated that he basically doesn't know and mentioned that this was a pilot program and that you could possibly plug it anywhere in the curriculum.

Jan said that because it was a pilot, after it came off the press, it would also go back to have changes made.

The question was asked how this program differs from "similar-sounding" books you can buy on the shelf. Is it supposed to be more vocationally oriented?

The reply was it is both legitimate math and vocational education. Discussion centered around about how these books were composed and the current applications that are in the books. The problem is, non-math teachers do not teach math because they don't know how. This makes it easy for them to teach. Teachers will need some form in inservice.

The question was asked how and if you would give credit for taking this math. It was answered by stating that how you give credit is up to the local school district, but there should be some form of credit given.

Ike introduced Tim Dose, Superintendent of Eddyville High School.

Tim gave his feelings on the Feasibility Study and commented that he is very ready to work closely with IHCC on this project.

Discussion then centered on communities not wanting to send their kids to other communities. It was felt that this should not be an issue; the issue is what is in the best interest of our students.

Steve asked Tim if this study was making it possible for schools to participate in this sharing project. Tim commented "probably not, but without this project they probably would not have recognized the vocational opportunities available."

BREAK

The floor was open to comments after break. Blakesburg would like the study staff to get more aggressive in suggesting appropriate high school level vocational programs.

Mrs. Poindexter suggested to Steve and Ike that they need to compile some data on this type of information and bring it before the retired teachers. "We have to get the retired teachers turned around; they need to know what's going on." Steve said that if the statewide associations in this room/study were to become more active in the issues raised by this study, it would be helpful.

John Van Ast felt that there were some areas which need attention and thought:

1. We need to redefine secondary education.
2. It needs to be competency-based in the Tech-Prep program.
3. Careers chosen need to be compatible with those competencies.
4. We need to reflect what the job market is.
5. Program completion needs recognition and high school staff need inservice.

Bill Walker has a few points he also felt important.

1. The college should not have stepped out of the process when local high schools were finalizing their sharing agreements.
2. Changing the name of the study would be desirable.
3. Use the funds wisely; consider what is most important.
4. Get high schools and IHCC back together and get more feedback.

5. The reason for some of the resistance is that teacher livelihood is threatened. It is necessary to keep communication open to alleviate this fear.
6. Aptitude testing is very valuable.
7. Quality curriculum is available.
8. Utilizing curriculum materials is a must.

Steve asked for some feedback from each association so that the study team would know where the associations wanted the study to go with the project. Ike added that "we want to know from the associations if you would like to see this project continue. It has something for everyone."

Adjourned.

APPENDIX F

"COOPERATION IS THE KEY"

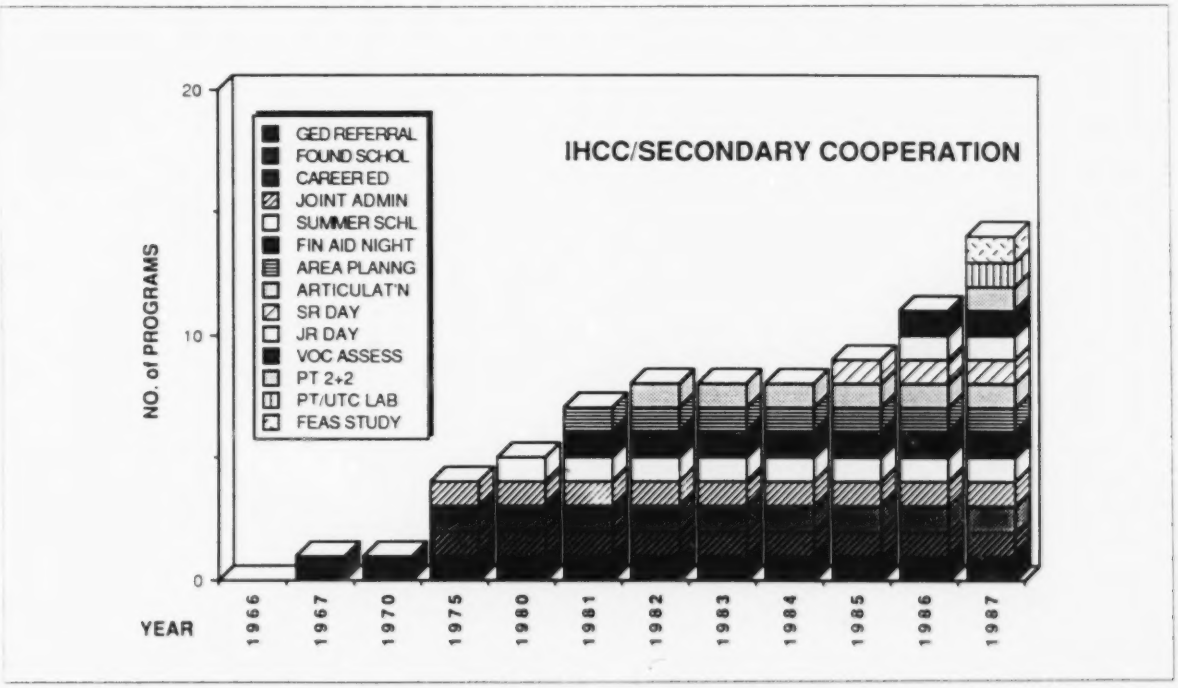
COOPERATION IS THE KEY:

A Synopsis of Shared Programs Between Local School Districts and Indian Hills Community College in Iowa

Indian Hills Community College is celebrating 20 years of quality service to students throughout its ten county service area in southeastern Iowa. Indian Hills offers 27 vocational technical programs, a fully-accredited arts and sciences transfer program, and numerous adult and continuing education offerings. Campuses are located within the city of Ottumwa, at the Ottumwa Industrial Airport, and in Centerville. Presently Indian Hills serves 2,600 full-time students with over 20,000 part-time students enrolled annually. Because education is felt to be a life-long process, over 800 classes are offered each year to gainfully employed personnel in area business and industry. Indian Hills dedicated a new Economic Development Center in 1987 located on the Ottumwa campus. Within this facility are federal, state and local initiatives uniquely designed to facilitate improved planning and delivery of economic development for the ten-county area served. Distinctive highlights for Indian Hills include national award-winning programs in Robotics/Automation, Computer Maintenance, and Laser/Electro-Optics; a four-day week; and a strong commitment to community service with an equally strong commitment to student success. The "Indian Hills family" is composed of some 290 faculty and staff, with greater than 98% of these employees evidencing their concern for students with annual contributions to the student scholarship fund. Accredited by North Central Association, Iowa Department of Education and the American Medical Association affiliates, the Indian Hills commitment to excellence is a long-standing one.

VOCATIONAL COOPERATION

Since commencing operations in July 1966, IHCC has progressively implemented fourteen distinct cooperative studies, programs, and organizational efforts with the 26 district secondary schools. These efforts (detailed on the following pages) expand quality vocational education opportunities for Merged Area XV secondary students. Area XV's depressed regional economy, low population densities, and declining K-12 enrollment patterns point to further innovations in vocational cooperation for the future.



Sequential implementation of fourteen cooperative programs between IHCC and area secondary schools has extended the quality and diversity of vocational opportunities to area high school students.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1967

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION GED

Free General Educational Development (GED) preparation classes have been offered in each county in Area XV since 1967. High school age students are accepted into the GED program only on written approval of the principals. The 262 GED graduates in 1987 comprised the second largest high school graduating class in the area. Among the graduates was one from Oskaloosa who received national honors for the highest GED test score in the nation. Since 1967, 4,663 students of all ages have completed GED certification in the area.

1975

IHCC FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

IHCC Foundation Scholarships have surpassed $500,000 since 1975. In the current year a record $89,409 was awarded to 442 students representing 102 home towns. Foundation scholarships are now awarded annually to the Valedictorians and Salutatorians of all 26 area high schools who attend IHCC. Consideration is currently being given to competitive events within selected secondary vocational areas, with winners to receive Foundation support. Within the college, cooperation is strong: 98% of all IHCC employees directly contributed more than $17,000 to the fund in fiscal year 1988.

1975

CAREER EDUCATION RESEARCH AND PLANNING

A career education advisory board composed of district administrators, representatives of the business community, and teachers, students, and parents from elementary and secondary schools as well as IHCC was established to provide research and planning. This effort resulted in a recommendation that a similar steering committee be formed in each district to provide input and write local career education implementation plans.

1975

JOINTLY ADMINISTERED SECONDARY PROGRAMS

Jointly administered programs currently involve 182 students in 11 school districts. Instruction by IHCC staff is now provided at participating high schools in the following areas: Food Service, Energy and Power Technology, Building and Trades, Multiple Occupations Cluster, Health Occupations, Office Technology, and Electronics. Mobile lab classes, such as Electronics, schedule visits to each participating school weekly, providing staff, curriculum, and specialized equipment sharing.

1980

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Through the Adult Basic Education Program IHCC works with area high schools to hire instructors and conduct secondary summer school classes in three locations: Ottumwa, Oskaloosa, and Centerville. Students who require only one or two units for high school graduation are referred to the program with a signed form indicating the credits required. In most districts the number of students involved has not justified independent district funding. On completion of 60 contact hours and assignments, credit is issued by the high school.

1980 **FINANCIAL AID NIGHTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS**

Information dissemination and student consultations have occurred at annual district-wide Financial Aid Nights since 1981. Financial aid presentations by IHCC staff have been conducted in 21 of the area high schools on an annual basis to distribute information, including SEOG and Pell Grant application assistance, to any interested senior, whether IHCC-bound or not.

1981 **AREA PLANNING COUNCIL**

In 1981 an Area Planning Council was formed for the ten counties composing Merged Area XV. Within these ten counties are 26 K-12 school districts, as well as Indian Hills Community College. Through the Area Planning Council, organized labor, business and industry, and human service agencies joined educators in the planning and delivery of vocational training. Since 1981 vocational attendance has been bolstered by both improved quality and diversified offerings resulting from joint funding and supportive relationships developed by the APC in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Education.

1982 **IHCC/SECONDARY VO-TECH ARTICULATION STUDY**

Six vocational task forces comprised of IHCC and secondary instructors met to develop common lists of competencies, to eliminate duplication, to develop measures of student outcomes, and to field test curriculum materials toward effecting articulation. Instructors from 12 high schools in Merged Area XV volunteered to field test the curriculum models from October 1983 to November 1984. Since 1984 this model has been used extensively throughout Iowa, and has generated interest nationwide.

1985 **SENIOR DAY**

Tours and curriculum orientations are held annually at the autumn College Day for area high school seniors. In cooperation with secondary administrators, instructors, and counselors, interested high school seniors from throughout Merged Area XV are dismissed from regular classes for a one day, special campus open house including tours of academic and vocational departments, campus facilities and services. In 1987, 450 students from 20 schools attended the session, with 75 volunteer IHCC staffers serving as hosts and guides on their day off.

1986 **JUNIOR DAY**

Department and program demonstration/information dissemination is offered at College Day for Juniors in the spring. In 1987, 410 high school juniors from 19 schools, and their counselors were transported to the IHCC campus for exposure to options and assistance in their post-secondary decision-making. This event replaced "college days" and "career days" in various district high schools, which had proved unworkable for a variety of reasons.

1986 **VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING**

Since 1986, IHCC has administered a pool of secondary school Carl Perkins Act funds for vocational assessment and career counseling assistance to academically and economically disadvantaged youth. IHCC has offered staffing to assist secondary counselors throughout Area XV identify qualifying youth; assess their preferences, aptitudes, and abilities through testing; and provide labor market, career, and training information. In 1987 nine high schools were served, with 226 youth tested as of June.

1987 **PRINCIPLES OF TECHNOLOGY 2+2**

By completing the secondary level Principles of Technology course, two semester-hours of credit in the IHCC High Technology core curriculum is granted. This "2 + 2" concept was implemented by IHCC in 1987 to strengthen and encourage systems training in applied physics at the secondary level, and provide articulation with IHCC programs in robotics, electronics/telecommunications, computer maintenance, and laser/electro-optics. Brochures and informative presentations have been developed for high school administrators, instructors, counselors, and students.

1987 **SHARED LAB FOR PRINCIPLES OF TECHNOLOGY AND UNIFIED TECHNICAL CONCEPTS**

Lab facilities for area high school Principles of Technology and college Unified Technical Concepts courses are uniquely shared. Beginning in Fall 1987, 21 secondary students attend classes and work in a new physics lab at IHCC's High Technology building. The 2-hour per day, year-long course uses special lab equipment ranging from thermometers to pyrometers, oscilloscopes and lasers purchased under joint funding agreements and grants. Instruction and curriculum materials are provided by IHCC, with grades reported through the high schools.

1987 **STUDY OF SHARING CURRICULUM AND FACILITIES BETWEEN IHCC AND LOCAL DISTRICTS**

A feasibility study of possible vocational curriculum and facility sharing between IHCC and seven area high schools was initiated in mid-1987. This three year project is state funded as a model in methodology for alternative voluntary cooperation between secondary districts. IHCC, in cooperation with a number of related educational entities, provides project leadership and documentation. To date numerous working meetings have been held involving the superintendents, board members, building principals, vocational instructors, and counselors from the seven secondary districts involved. Preliminary indications are positive for major steps in a phased implementation Fall of 1988. Two high schools are piloting CORD materials in "applied math" spring semester of 1988.

For further information contact:

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APPENDIX G

NEWS CLIPPINGS

Hedrick vows fight

By STEVE WEBBER 8-12-87
Courier area editor

HEDRICK — The Hedrick school board will ask a district court judge to reconsider his ruling to allow an election proposing a merger of Hedrick and Pekin school districts.

Judge James Jenkins of Albia ruled last Thursday that the Southern Prairie Area Education Agency acted properly in asking for a vote following receipt of a merger-vote petition in 1986.

The board members, frustrated with the judge's action, will ask their attorney, Kenneth Keith of Ottumwa, to file the reconsideration motion in Keokuk County District Court in Sigourney.

It's the school board's last step before it may appeal Jenkins' ruling to the Iowa Supreme Court.

Jenkins told The Courier on Tuesday that Hedrick's action is a "a procedural matter and pretty routine."

If Jenkins rules that he doesn't reconsider his original action, the Hedrick board will have 30 days from the reconsideration to appeal to the higher court.

After holding a public hearing on Aug. 12, 1986, the AEA agreed to let the districts' residents vote on a proposed merger. The AEA cited that because 20 percent of both districts' eligible voters had signed the petition, the agency was bound by law to hold an election.

However, opponents to the election cited a statement — signed by 551 Hedrick residents and filed on Aug. 6 with the AEA — objecting to the petition.

On Sept. 5, 1986, the Hedrick board filed an appeal in Keokuk County District Court requesting a judge to determine if the AEA acted properly.

That filing postponed the merger election which was scheduled for Oct. 14, 1986, and a Supreme Court appeal would postpone that election again.

AEA administrator Don Roseberry said the Hedrick board members' motion to reconsider is "their prerogative."

The Hedrick board on Tuesday, though, tabled a motion on a Supreme Court appeal until Monday's regular meeting.

Board president Linda Abel sidetracked that motion, saying the board should have more public input before making a decision.

Abel said she is "not afraid" of a merger vote. But board members pointed out that even if the vote failed, merger supporters could file another such merger petition every six months.

Board member Ervin Breon said the board's appeal "wasn't an appeal of the reorganization vote, but an appeal of a lack of information."

Breon said the local bank "was busier than cat fur" notarizing petitions against the merger vote, "but those objections were never considered."

Saying he thought the Hedrick school board "won" the appeal hearing last week, board member Jon Walker said he's concerned that any future fighting of the AEA decison "would only drag students, staff and administrators down further."

Roseberry said the election would be conducted by the Keokuk County auditor, and the ballots would be counted by people in that office.

"If it (the election) goes through and it carries, there is nothing we can do about it," Walker said.

"We've been dumped on and lied to since the beginning," Walker continued. "We've had no public hearing, no chance for discussion, and the only thing for the voters to do is to vote no."

Board member Roger Abel said "they want this place to close."

Jim Ferrell of rural Hedrick urged board members to fight the merger as hard and as long as they could.

"This whole thing has been like dealing with the Gestapo," he said. "It's like being kicked in the groin and them asking us to say thank-you."

Walker said that although "we've been lied to and railroaded" what board members do "reflects on the kids and drags us down at the same time."

"How are they going to enforce it? " Ferrell asked. "What are they going to do, come down and shoot us?"

Walker added: "If they want to close us, they're going to have to come down here to do it. And it's going to be war."

Walker also suggested "if this (reorganization) isn't done properly, there's going to be blood shed over this."

Breon added: "That's not a threat. That's a possibility."

Hedrick OKs sharing plan with Fremont

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

HEDRICK — The Hedrick school board on Tuesday reaffirmed plans to share programs with Fremont schools.

Fremont superintendent Randy McCauley attended the special meeting saying: "I wanted to see what's going on."

The two districts have been discussing how to further share academic and athletic programs.

And some Hedrick residents would rather merge with Fremont schools than with Pekin.

Hedrick board member Roger Abel told McCauley they're concerned that any decision they make "might drag Fremont down with us," and didn't want to proceed on sharing programs with Fremont "without you knowing all the facts."

The board agreed to proceed with athletic and academic program sharing plans with Fremont schools. The two schools will share all athletic programs this year, and are working on a feasibility study to share academic programs.

McCauley said his board has also discussed program sharing with Eddyville and Oskaloosa schools.

"We are of the feeling that we can make a go of it with Hedrick," McCauley said.

☐AEA hopes for vote soon — 3

Southern Iowa

Area schools count 370 fewer students

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

Although public school enrollment in Southern Iowa dropped by 2 percent this fall, nine school districts saw student numbers increase.

Public schools counted 24,164 students this fall, or 370 less overall than the 24,534 students counted last year at this time.

Harmony, Pekin, Hedrick and Moravia each enrolled 3 percent more students this year.

Tri-County and Chariton each saw a 2 percent increase, while Centerville, North Mahaska and Fremont experienced a 1 percent gain.

Two of the big enrollment winners this fall were Harmony and Moravia.

Harmony Superintendent Allen Whitlatch said, "Our enrollment had dropped to 535 midway through spring last year, and we were hoping to pick up some and break even with last year — we actually came up above it."

Harmony enrolled 564, or 14 more, students this fall, and Whitlatch is "real pleased."

Whitlatch said, "We have a fairly large kindergarten class — right at 58 — while we graduated out a smaller senior class last year."

Moravia Superintendent William Nielsen didn't realize his district would grow by 14 students this year until a week before school started.

"We were looking for about the same number as last year," Nielsen said. "We noticed that our enrollment would be up when we saw the families that moved in during the summer, but we didn't know by how much."

Enrollment losses in Southern Iowa ranged from 1 percent in a number of districts to as much as 7, 8 and 9 percent respectively at Eddyville, Lineville-Clio and Fox Valley.

Fox Valley's 9 percent enrollment loss represents 21 fewer students than last year's fall class of 226 in grades K-12.

Fox Valley Superintendent Roger Davis said, "I expected to lose on enrollment because we lost quite a few students during the school year last year.

"I suppose it's more than we expected, but it's hard to tell sometimes. A number of people moved out of the district and our kindergarten class this year is smaller than last year's graduating class."

Lineville-Clio Superintendent Ron Bethards said his district's loss of eight students was "not what we expected."

"We had 11 students graduate last year, and we have only five in kindergarten this year," Bethards said, "so that's a majority of it right there."

Albia Superintendent John Thomas knew his school's enrollment would be down — 2 percent.

"We keep thinking it's going to level off," he said, "but perhaps it won't happen for a while.

"Elementary enrollments are starting to come back some, but nothing like it was in the 1960s and 1970s."

Cardinal school district lost 16 students, or 2 percent, and Superintendent Wendell Johnson sees that as "good news."

"The loss was considerably less than we expected," Johnson said. "We had some families move in, and not as many moved out as we anticipated with the closing of Hormel."

Fairfield Superintendent John Kelley lost a few more students than he expected — 68 students or 3 percent.

"We're hoping for a turnaround with some growth in industry, but we're not able to realize that growth at this time," Kelley said.

"The people being put on staff by industry here haven't arrived yet. We hope this is a low point and from here on out we start picking up students."

Fremont Superintendent Randy McCaulley gained just two students (1 percent), but he was "just real happy with our enrollment."

"We're pleased we had that many," he said, "because projections were that we wouldn't be that high (203)."

Keota has exactly the same number of students enrolled this fall as last fall — 79 — and Superintendent Keith Sasseen isn't surprised at all.

"We had numbers in our graduating class last year that were pretty much offset by our kindergarten class this year," he said.

Southern Iowa school enrollment

School	1986-87	1987-88	Loss/gain	Percentage
Ottumwa	5,229	5,093	-136	-3%
Albia	1,382	1,360	-22	-2%
Blakesburg	280	266	-14	-5%
Cardinal	828	812	-16	-2%
Centerville	1,775	1,791	+16	+15
Chariton	1,404	1,407	+3	+2%
Davis County	1,482	1,438	-48	-3%
Eddyville	638	596	-42	-7%
Fairfield	2,057	2,009	-68	-3%
Fox Valley	226	205	-21	-9%
Fremont	201	203	+2	+1%
Harmony	550	564	+14	+3%
Hedrick	200	206	+6	+3%
Keota	479	479	NC	NC
Lineville-Clio	106	98	-8	-8%
Moravia	439	453	+14	+3%
Moulton-Udell	338	336	-2	-1%
North Mahaska	489	495	+6	+1%
Oskaloosa	2,569	2,534	-35	-1%
Pekin	556	572	+16	+3%
Russell	252	242	-10	-4%
Seymour	419	405	-14	-3%
Sigourney	732	715	-17	-2%
Tri-County	456	464	+8	+2%
Van Buren	719	709	-10	-1%
Wayne	728	712	-6	-1%

Ottumwa schools lose 136 students

By JUDY KRIEGER
Courier staff writer

Enrollment is down 136 students in the Ottumwa School District.

Total enrollment is 5,093 students, down from last year's official count of 5,229 students.

Tuesday's official count of 5,093 is less than the 5,096 students reported Friday.

The reason, explained Willis Ahrens, administrative assistant, is because figures for students who tuition in or out of the district had to be verified, which his staff was doing this week.

Even though enrollment is down, it doesn't look too bad, Ahrens said. It will, however, he noted, "if it keeps losing year after year."

Totals by class are: 12th grade (including Alternative students), 409; 11th grade 361; 10th grade 418; ninth grade 341; eighth grade 398; seventh grade 378; sixth 372; fifth 395; fourth 370; third 395; second 407; first 418; kindergarten 387.

The 387 kindergarten students looks good to school officials. "We thought it would be 353 from the census," Ahrens said.

There could be a few problems looming in the future, he said, because some grades "act like a yo-yo," with numbers increasing or decreasing from year to year.

The 341 number for ninth-grade students "can cause problems in staffing, if nothing else," he said. But if the next three grades continue to show the larger numbers, problems will ease. "It's sort of an unknown out there, really."

Following is a comparison of enrollment figures at each school in the Ottumwa district, for this fall, and last fall. The high school total includes Alternative School students.

School	1987	1986
Agassiz	394	403
Douma	380	383
Eisenhower	235	224
Horace Mann	264	258
James	241	256
Lincoln	209	193
Pickwick	231	242
Wildwood	368	372
Wilson	422	438
Elementary Total	2,744	2,769
SPAEA pre-school	45	53
Evans Jr. High	776	757
Ottumwa High	1,529	1,642
TOTAL	5,094	5,221

(The count turned in to the state, however, is 5,093, because of the tuition in and out student number which left the district with a deficit of one this year; and eight last year.)

Tiny schools to lobby for life

10-3-87

DES MOINES (AP) — Iowa's smallest school districts plan to form a lobbying group in hopes of preserving their existence.

Rural Schools of Iowa is targeting its membership drive at school systems with about 700 students or less. With formal incorporation under way, it has already begun holding information sessions around the state.

Guttenberg Superintendent James Pasut said the group is following the lead set by other education groups: Hire a lobbyist.

"We want to do as other groups have done," Pasut said. "These are the ones, if you look around, that are getting what they want."

The group wants the Iowa Board of Education and the Iowa Legislature to hear small school concerns about accreditation standards, arbitrary school requirements and forced reorganization.

Larry Waugh, a school board member for the Whiting district and director for Rural Schools, said, "There are a lot of good, small schools out there that I feel are being overlooked for their quality.

"They're (legislators and members of the Iowa Board of Education) going after quantity."

Rural schools don't have the high dropout rates of cities like Des Moines, Waugh said. "As long as our schools rank so well on (standardized and college-entrance) tests, the districts are running in the black, and the kids go on to further education successfully, why can't we continue to exist?"

Waugh said he is not quarreling with efforts of the best known rural school group, People United for Rural Education, but said that group isn't potent enough. PURE, he said, charges only $10 dues for individuals and $100 for school districts.

Waugh said that kind of money won't go very far. "You can't compete with associations like the teachers union (Iowa Education Association) with budgets of one-half to three-fourths of a million dollars per year."

So Rural Schools of Iowa will charge $500 per school district to fund its Des Moines office and lobbyist.

Meanwhile, the president of PURE welcomed the newcomer organization and predicted the two groups would eventually merge.

"They are probably accurate in saying our dues are too low," said Claudia Jones of Conrad, who helped found PURE 12 years ago.

But PURE has accomplished a lot by remaining a lay, volunteer citizen advocacy group, Jones said. "We've grown beyond the 'anti-reorganization' movement. We have brought alternatives to reorganization to Iowa. We're responsible for legalizing sharing by Iowa school districts, we were the first to get into telecommunications, we look at a lot of alternatives."

The group also has an effective "telephone tree," Jones said. "We can generate 200 phone calls in less than an hour's time."

Hedrick, Fremont boards OK sharing pact draft

10/7/87

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

FREMONT — School board members from Hedrick and Fremont agreed at a joint meeting Monday to approve the rough draft of a total curriculum sharing agreement.

Both schools currently share all athletic programs.

Hedrick school board secretary Linda Brain said the 28E sharing agreement is "a very rough draft," and calls for the high school to be in Fremont, the middle school in Hedrick and elementary schools in both districts.

Each school board unanimously agreed to total curriculum sharing, but financial details must still be worked out.

Under the sharing agreement, each school district would retain its school board and superintendent.

The two school districts are hoping to implement the total sharing plan for the 1988-89 school year, Brain said.

The two school boards have scheduled two meetings on consecutive nights for public discussion of the sharing agreement.

The two boards will meet in Hedrick at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 26; and in Fremont the following night — 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 27.

Hedrick, Fremont review sharing plan

By LINDA POPEJOY
Courier correspondent 10/27/87

HEDRICK — All Hedrick and Fremont elementary and junior high students will attend their respective districts, but some high school students will be bussed, says a proposed sharing agreement between the two schools.

The plan, revealed at a joint meeting of the two boards in Hedrick on Monday, will be discussed at another joint meeting in Fremont at 7:30 p.m. today.

Each board will vote separately on whether to approve the proposed sharing program in November.

Hedrick Superintendent Roger Younkin said sharing with Fremont would improve the school's program by expanding the curriculum, putting more kids into each program, and saving money for both districts.

More advanced courses could be offered because there would be more students, he said.

Besides the student attendance arrangement, the proposal says each school district would:

- Use comparable elementary study materials.
- Develop a sharing committee, represented by two board members from each school and both superintendents. The committee would decide disciplinary and school policies, handbooks and any unexpected expenses. If committee members disagree, a neutral person will be selected to make the decision.
- Maintain respective district's instructional equipment and furniture.
- Employ the present number of teachers, adding one or two more to staffs. A district's contract with its teacher association would remain the same.
- Keep the current athletic program sharing agreement the same.

People attending Monday's meeting were generally in agreement with the proposed sharing plan.

Some people felt that one librarian wasn't enough, and board members agreed to discuss the possibility each district employ a librarian.

Fremont school attorney Brian Groom said sharing programs have their problems, "but nothing that can't be worked out."

Groom said the two districts should give the sharing agreement a two-year test, adding the agreement can be dissolved at any time by mutual agreement.

Groom predicts the districts would save about $10,000 each year under the proposal.

Hedrick's possible lawsuit appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court shouldn't affect the sharing agreement, Groom said.

Hedrick is appealing a district court judge's ruling that the Southern Prairie Area Education Association was correct in planning a vote on a proposal that the two districts merge.

Eddyville school OKs sharing plan

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — The Eddyville school board Monday night approved the final draft of the Blakesburg/Eddyville 1987-88 academic sharing agreement.

In other business, the board:

- Hired Jacquelyn Tilbur as a part-time elementary aide at $4 per hour.
- Hired Wade Schelker as freshman/sophomore girls basketball coach and Gladys Kraber as junior high basketball coach.

10-27-87

Appeal postpones merger vote

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 10/27/87

HEDRICK — Scheduling a vote on the possible merger of the Hedrick and Pekin school districts has been postponed until after the Iowa Supreme Court hears the Hedrick school board's appeal.

Both the Southern Prairie Area Education Agency and Hedrick are awaiting a hearing date in the Suprmeme Court.

An Iowa Supreme Court clerk said Monday that attorney briefs haven't been filed yet, and it will be "quite some time" before a hearing is scheduled.

Hedrick is appealing the decision by Albia Judge James Jenkins, who ruled in Keokuk County District Court in August that the AEA acted properly in scheduling the merger election for Oct. 14, 1986.

Jenkins also refused Hedrick's request that he reconsider his decision.

AEA administrator Don Roseberry said, "We can't schedule the election until they (Hedrick school board members) have used all of their resources available as far as an appeal is concerned."

The AEA decided Aug. 12, 1986, that a merger election should be held in both the Hedrick and Pekin school districts after a merger petition signed by 275 people was filed with the AEA.

A list of 551 people objecting to the merger was then filed with the AEA.

On Sept. 5, 1986, the Hedrick school board then filed its appeal in Keokuk County District Court.

The Supreme Court appeal has for all practical purposes postponed the merger election past the deadline for Hedrick and Pekin to merge for the 1988-89 school year.

Such a merger would require a majority vote in each school district favoring the proposal.

According to state law, a vote for a 1988-89 reorganization must be held before Dec. 1 of the preceding year, and the county auditor must receive, at least, a 30-day notice of an election.

While the AEA and Hedrick school board members await their day in court, Hedrick and Fremont school board members are talking about total class sharing of the two schools.

Those two schools already share all athletic programs.

Fremont residents rip school sharing proposal

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 10/27/87

FREMONT — Fremont residents voiced emotional objections Tuesday to a proposed total class sharing plan with Hedrick school district.

Ann Failyer said her children would be the fourth generation of her family to graduate from Fremont High School, "but unless there are drastic changes, they won't graduate from Fremont."

She questioned Hedrick school board members' motives for entering into the sharing agreement.

Referring to Hedrick's Supreme Court appeal of an election on the proposed merger of the Hedrick and Pekin school districts, Failyer compared Hedrick to to a jilted lover "on the rebound."

Failyer also is bothered by what she views as a "let's try it, and see how it works," attitude about the sharing plan.

"This is not a business or a load of corn," she said. "These are our children and you can't go back and undo it."

Peggy Steffen of Fremont is concerned over "so much talk about meeting minimum standards."

"I don't want to see minimums," she said. "I want the best education for my kids."

Steffen feels the combination of Hedrick and Fremont "is too small to survive," adding, "I can see many people appealing out of the district for geographical or educational opportunities."

"And if I want my kids to take calculus," she said, "they'll go to a different school district."

Fremont Superintendent Randy McCaulley said both Fremont and Hedrick showed enrollment increases this fall, but they can't predict how many students they'd lose if the sharing agreement is approved.

More than one person questioned the validity of a straw vote taken at a previous meeting, saying a number of people left the meeting before the vote was taken.

They also questioned results of a Fremont survey that showed Hedrick as a first choice for sharing, and asked for as chance to vote on the plan.

Fremont School Board Member Larry McCurdy cited the cost of holding an election, adding, "you've elected us, that's why we're trying to listen to you."

"Fremont may have a silent majority out there, because it's the kind of community that doesn't voice its opinion like some others," McCurdy said.

"We have to go on what input we receive. We want you to tell us what you want."

John Wyngarden questioned how long a sharing agreement with Hedrick would last.

He believes Fremont should look at sharing with a larger school first — Eddyville or Oskaloosa — instead of risking putting the students through another school change too soon.

"There are no guarantees," Fremont Board Member Bob Sterling said. "The agreement could last four or five years, but we can't guarantee there aren't going to be legislative changes.

"If the state says 600 is a minimum enrollment, then so be it."

Allen Holliman feels the Fremont board didn't spend as much time considering sharing options with Eddyville and Oskaloosa as they have with Hedrick.

McCaulley said both Eddyville and Oskaloosa indicated "they didn't want to get into a bidding war on the tuition rate."

"If dollars were the only consideration," McCurdy added, "then maybe one of the other options would be better."

Fremont Board Member John Carter said, "How parents react to any change will determine how it will affect the kids."

Fremont citizens ask 'how much' for sharing plan

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

10-29-87

FREMONT — Superintendents of two schools considering a classroom sharing agreement don't know what the proposal will cost.

Fremont superintendent Randy McCaulley and Hedrick superintendent Roger Younkin said it's too difficult to nail down specific sharing costs, how much they would save in some areas and how much more it would cost them in others.

> ***'We really haven't sat down and figured out the cost difference. We won't know that until the agreement is signed.'***
>
> *— Roger Younkin*
> *Hedrick superintendent*

"To meet the new state standards would cost more to do ourselves than the sharing would cost," McCaulley said.

Younkin said, "We really haven't sat down and figured out the cost difference.

"We won't know that until the agreement is signed, and we set down and schedule the kids and get the whole thing budgeted out," Younkin continued.

The two school boards held a public hearing in Fremont Tuesday night and McCaulley was surprised that only opponents of a proposed sharing plan aired their views.

Saying the negative reaction wasn't representative of the whole Fremont community, McCaulley said, "We knew some weren't in favor of it, but I thought there might be more comments from supporters of the idea."

Fremont resident Richard Pippert asked how much transportation costs would rise and was told the Fremont board has "speculated" an increase of about $13,000.

Ron Failyer, also from Fremont, asked if a student activity bus would be available and whether the bus would bring Fremont middle school students back to the school or to their homes.

Cedar Rapids attorney Steve Howes said final transportation arrangements haven't been worked out, but will be decided with assistance from the Department of Education.

"You should decide it before you sign it," Failyer said. "In sports, every kid wants to participate. Make the right choice and vote this down."

Pippert also asked if the two boards were considering sharing administrators, since the state offers financial incentives for such plans.

McCaulley explained that each district would receive $10,000 for signing the sharing agreement, and that the state monies for shared administrators is a separate thing altogether.

Sharing school administrators is something that "right now we are not pursuing," he said.

McCaulley said the two boards felt it was important to "get off the ground" with the sharing agreement.

Hedrick resident Craig Sylvester asked how the two boards could afford to meet state mandated minimum teacher salaries of $18,000 — particularly if a number of parents successfully appeal out of the district, which would then lose per-pupil state aid.

McCaulley said both districts are looking at their budgets and how Phase 1 and Phase 2 state monies will be used to meet those standards. He added that they couldn't speculate how many pupils would be lost through parent appeals.

Fremont resident Peg Steffen feels the combination of Fremont and Hedrick programs "is too small to survive," and noted low teacher salary schedules in both districts.

"The average teacher salary in Fremont last year was $13,172 and that was second lowest in the state," she said. "Hedrick wasn't much better at eighth from the bottom."

Younkin said teacher salaries would be "subject to negotiations."

About 100 people came to Tuesday's public hearing, and many had the impression that Fremont school board members had already made up their minds on how they'll vote on the sharing agreement.

Fremont board members repeatedly said they haven't decided how they'll vote, and that the public has 30 days in which to offer more input.

The two boards can't vote on the agreement until 30 days after Tuesday's public hearing.

IHCC, high schools study vocational education plan

11-6-87

A nine-member team recently met with project coordinator J. Ira Ryan to review the concept and growth of the pilot vocational educational program for Southern Iowa secondary students at Indian Hills Community College.

The evaluation committee included Iowa high school superintendents and principals, representatives of the Department of Education, the Iowa Association of School Boards, and post-secondary vocational deans and directors.

The vocational program would allow school districts to cooperatively design and administer vocational courses using common facilities, equipment, curriculum, and instructors.

Ottumwa would serve as the regional site for the program with representatives from Indian Hills Community College, secondary school districts and the Area Planning Council helping to guide it.

Secondary schools participating are Blakesburg, Cardinal, Davis County, Fremont, Hedrick, Eddyville and Ottumwa.

A summary report will be shared with the participating school districts.

Eddyville improvements to go voters

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — Plans for improvements to the Eddyville school will be brought before the voters in a bond issue.

The school board on Monday approved placing the following new building plans on the ballot: construction of a new 50x60-foot bus barn, widening of the cafeteria, enlarging the high school shop, and adding a multi-purpose room, two classrooms, art room, two restrooms, a weightlifting room and a storage room to the high school.

The cost of the project is unknown, but Superintendent Tim Dose indicated it would be a "little under $1 million."

In other business, the board:

• Approved placing new basketball/wrestling/volleyball scoreboards in the gym with acknowledgements to Cargill, Heartland-Lysine and the First State Bank of Iowa for their significant contributions to the purchase.

The Sports Boosters, sponsors of the project, raised $5,000. Installation charges increased the cost of the boards to $5,720. The school board agreed to pay the $720 to complete the project.

• Hired Richard Whitaker as high school guidance counselor, effective Nov. 16. Whitaker is a former principal from West Burlington and is a graduate student at the University of Iowa.

• Approved the following as designated smoking areas: bus garage lounge, elementary faculty smoking lounge, high school rear stage area, boiler room and industrial arts wing hallway.

11-10-87

Cardinal superintendent presents resignation

11-10-87

By MARSHA HUNTER
Courier correspondent

ELDON — Superintendent Wendell Johnson presented his resignation Monday night after serving 11 years in the Cardinal School District.

Johnson, who is retiring June 30, has been involved in education as a teacher, principal or superintendent for 38 years.

The board inspected a list of 15 high school students who plan to drop out of school at the end of the first quarter. Some students stated personal problems, dislike of school, and dislike of school responsibilities as reasons for dropping out.

There were 285 students enrolled at Cardinal High School as of Sept. 15.

Discussions were held on the new federal law regarding the removal of asbestos in schools, fire protection and insurance, centralized vocational education program, and discipline standards being revised by the State Board of Education.

The board approved new policies on student records and a new anti-discrimination policy.

Hedrick board studies school sharing plan

11-17-87

By LINDA POPEJOY
Courier correspondent

HEDRICK — Hedrick school board members expect a decision this week from the Iowa Department of Education on proposed total program sharing plans with the Fremont school district.

School board members from each district will discuss and vote on the sharing plan at separate special meetings scheduled at 7 p.m. on Dec. 2.

Hedrick Superintendent Roger Younkin said Monday that "negotiations are moving slowly on the Hedrick-Fremont sharing plan."

"The state hasn't made any decisions regarding the issue," he added, "but should make one some time this week."

Younkin also said that further joint meetings between the two school districts "will not be necessary."

Hedrick school board members expressed concern about the activity bus policy in the sharing plan.

Hedrick's current policy states that if a student rides the activity bus to a school function, the student also must return on school transportation unless different arrangements are made by the student's parents.

Board members suggested the school policy be changed such that the school will provide the transportation, but that students aren't required to use it.

Board members, however, voted to continue with the exisiting policy.

Board Member Roger Abel voted against that motion.

Abel and Board Member Ervin Breon also expressed concern about Fremont's shop class facilities, if the sharing plan is approved.

Abel said he will not vote in favor of the sharing proposal, unless Fremont gets better shop facilities or the shop classes are held at Hedrick.

Under the sharing plan, high school classes for both districts, including the shop classes, would be held at Fremont.

Junior high or middle school classes would be held in Hedrick under the proposed plan, and both districts would retain their elementary school programs.

In other businsess, the school board:

• Hired Jackie Smith as a substitute fourth grade teacher for $13,200 plus Phase I funds.

• Hired Connie Glick as a kindergarten aide for three half-days each week at $3.35 per hour.

Hedrick: Yes; Fremont: No

Sharing plan put on hold

By STEVE WEBBER
and LINDA POPEJOY
Courier staff writers

FREMONT — Fremont school board members on Wednesday declined a waltz toward sharing all classes with Hedrick.

But they emphasized the music isn't over, and showed interest in shifting to a square dance involving Fremont, Hedrick, Blakesburg and Eddyville.

Hedrick school board members unanimously approved signing the proposed agreement with Fremont.

In a separate meeting Wednesday, however, the Fremont board voted not to sign the agreement by a 4-1 vote. Bob Sterling was the lone Fremont board member who wanted the agreeement.

Fremont board member Larry McCurdy qualified his "no" vote by saying his vote isn't final. He noted the Fremont board has until Feb. 1, 1988, to change its decision.

Fremont voted against the agreement because of last-minute major changes suggested by Hedrick board members.

The vote was also affected by what Fremont superintendent Randy McCaulley called "brainstorming" on a sharing idea being discussed by superintedents from Fremont, Hedrick, Blakesburg and Eddyville.

Blakesburg and Eddyville recently signed an agreement to share some classes.

Superintendents and two school board members from each of the four districts plan to meet Wednesday in Eddyville to begin discussions on the suggested four-school sharing idea.

Hedrick board member Jon Walker stressed that his board's vote doesn't mean the Hedrick-Fremont contract will be signed. He said changes may still be made.

McCaulley, however, said only minor changes can be made in the proposed Hedrick-Fremont agreement discussed at public hearings in the districts.

Major changes would require starting the process all over again, McCaulley said.

Fremont board members Neal Brown and Bob Sterling said they'd received telephone calls from an unidentified Hedrick board member on Monday suggesting the two boards get together "five-on-five" and further discuss the proposed plan.

Brown said he told that person "the only way we can do that is at a public meeting."

Brown said Hedrick was concerned about where students would graduate, and the possiblility of "flip-flopping" the high school site between the two districts in alternating years.

After conducting an informal survey, Fremont board members felt district residents opposed the Hedrick-Fremont agreement by a narrow margin.

Eddyville, Fremont boards delay work on sharing plan

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — Eddyville and Fremont school board members on Monday postponed scheduling public hearings on a class sharing proposal.

Both districts also are looking at a bigger sharing idea involving Blakesburg and Hedrick.

Eddyville and Fremont school board members must have a public hearing on their sharing plan before Dec. 31, if the plan is to be implemented for the 1988-89 school year.

Eddyville Board President Curtis Jager said, "We have to assume tonight we are going to have a public hearing and work within that time."

Fremont Board Member Larry McCurdy said, "We are interested in whole grade sharing for grades 9-12." And Fremont Board President Neal Brown added, "We haven't ruled out doing something with seventh and eighth grades."

Both boards unanimously voted to form a joint subcommittee to develop specific sharing plans which will be taken to each school board on Monday.

Subcommittee members are Fremont Superintendent Randy McCaulley, Fremont board members Neal Brown and Larry McCurdy, Eddyville Superintendent Tim Dose and Eddyville board members Ron Shafer and Curtis Jager.

The subcommittee meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Friday.

Both boards will decide at their regular meetings Monday if or when they will schedule public hearings on an Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan.

Jager said the public hearings would be on the "intent to share."

He said that specific arrangments could be worked out by both boards prior to Feb. 1.

While the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan was put on hold temporarily, superintendents and board members from Eddyville, Fremont, Hedrick and Blakesburg will meet Wednesday to discuss a suggested sharing plan involving all four.

Eddyville recently signed a partial sharing agreement with Blakesburg.

Officials meet to consider four-school sharing

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

EDDYVILLE — Superintendents from four Southern Iowa schools are not talking about their meeting on Wednesday in which they discussed a possible four-way sharing plan.

The superintendents from Blakesburg, Fremont, Eddyville and Hedrick were accompanied at the meeting by two school board members from each district.

Blakesburg Superintendent Robert Hull said: "We have no details to give out. The four schools met and we discussed some issues, but nothing was decided or brought forward for policy action."

Board members and superintendents will now discuss the idea with people in their own districts.

Hull said no definite times or dates have been set for a second meeting of the four districts.

Fremont school board members last week voted not to sign a sharing agreement with Hedrick. They cited last-minute changes suggested by Hedrick school board members and comments from Fremont Superintendent Randy McCaulley on the possible four-school sharing plan as reasons for the vote delay.

McCaulley said the superintendents have discussed that the four districts maintain elementary schools, with the high school being located in Eddyville and middle schools in Fremont and Blakesburg.

McCaulley "emphasized" that "we are only brainstorming on ideas of what we potentially could do."

McCaulley said most of the superintendents were interested in pursuing the four-school sharing plan as soon as possible.

But he said Hedrick was interested in the plan "maybe four or five years down the line."

McCaulley said they also discussed the idea of giving the four-school shared district a "pseudoname" so the high school and sports teams would be identified.

McCaulley said the combined enrollment of all four schools would be between 1,200 and 1,300 students — and between 350 and 400 students in grades 9-12.

McCaulley said Fremont would have to agree to the four-school sharing plan in order to get Hedrick into the plan, because Hedrick school district isn't adjacent to the Eddyville district.

McCaulley told his board members that the superintendents are suggesting that "we'd be looking at planning next year, and the following year implementing the plan."

Talk of all four schools sharing classes and buildings comes on the heels of individual sharing talks between the school districts.

Although Fremont postponed action on the Hedrick-Fremont agreement, Hedrick board members have unanimously approved signing an agreement.

The door isn't closed on the Fremont-Hedrick plan, however, because the two districts have until Feb. 1, 1988, to sign the agreement in order for it to take effect for the 1988-89 school year.

Fremont and Hedrick are sharing all sports and some extra-curricular activities this year.

Eddyville and Fremont school board members on Monday also postponed a scheduled public hearing on a sharing proposal between those two districts.

A public hearing on their proposed plan must be held prior to Dec. 31, 1987, for it to take effect for the 1988-89 school year.

Eddyville is involved in a partial or "specific class" sharing plan begun this school year with Blakesburg.

Spicing the scenario even more is Hedrick's wait for a day in the Iowa Supreme Court.

The Hedrick school board is fighting a Southern Prairie Area Education Agency vote scheduled on the proposed merger of the Hedrick and Pekin school districts.

Hedrick school board is appealing an August ruling in Keokuk County District Court, which said the AEA acted properly under Iowa law in scheduling the vote.

Iowa appellate clerk of court Collette Spain said briefs haven't been filed yet in the Hedrick appeal, "and it could be quite a while" before the court schedules a hearing.

Fremont school pursues Eddyville sharing plan

15 residents protest, favor pact with Hedrick

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent 12/15/87

FREMONT — Fremont school board members on Monday voted to pursue sharing plans with Eddyville, despite the fact that some 15 residents challenged the board's recent vote against signing a sharing plan with Hedrick.

Mark Rhinehart said, "I fail to understand what direction this board is heading.

"I feel a majority of the people still want the Hedrick-Fremont sharing agreement to go into effect."

Lincoln Rhinehart said, "I feel a wedge has been driven between the communities."

Board Member Larry McCurdy said he feels "Hedrick is No. 2 at this point," referring to sharing talks with Eddyville.

But when Fremont board members were asked if Hedrick was out of the sharing picture, they each individually answered "no."

McCurdy asked Fremont Board President Neal Brown if Hedrick still was ready to sign the sharing agreement after the "yes" vote by that board on the Fremont-Hedrick sharing plan.

Brown answered, "No."

Brown said that "changes they (Hedrick) want to discuss would mean starting over again with a public meeting."

Board Member John Carter said Hedrick "shouldn't be talking about major changes, especially not changes which have been voted on unanimously."

Board Member Bob Sterling said "a lot of things got blown out of proportion," referring to sharing talks between Fremont and Hedrick.

McCurdy said, "We have other options, but we were willing to pursue the Hedrick option because we thought it was what a majority of the people wanted."

Sterling added, "We hired an independent person from the state to tell us where the high school and middle school would be, and agreed to go by their decision knowing we were going to vote it down if the high school was not here" in Fremont.

Superintendents and two board members each from Fremont and Eddyville met Friday to discuss the sharing proposal.

Under that proposed three-year agreement, Fremont would send all of its high school students (grades 9-12) to Eddyville for both classes and extra-curricular activities beginning with the 1988-89 school year.

Fremont's estimated cost of the sharing agreement would be 83 percent of the per-pupil cost the district receives from the state — or about $116,449 to send 512 students to Eddyville for one school year.

Fremont would pay for transportation costs to and from Eddyville, but Eddyville would run an activity bus back to Fremont. Students living in town would be brought to the school, while rural students would be brought to their homes.

A special joint meeting of both school boards will be held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at Fremont.

Public hearings on the proposed Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan are tentatively scheduled in Eddyville on Friday and in Fremont on Monday.

Eddyville keeps sharing options open

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — The Eddyville school board Monday night agreed to pursue sharing plans with Fremont.

Fremont also voted Monday night to pursue sharing plans with Eddyville despite community concern over a proposed sharing plan with Hedrick.

Eddyville Superintendent Tim Dose said the relationship of Fremont and Hedrick "doesn't have any impact on us.

"If there are avenues any district can follow to improve students' education, those avenues should be followed."

He explained that the type of agreement being discussed with Fremont is "very workable, can probably allow the districts to operate more efficiently, and will still maintain the rural atmosphere."

In the proposed three-year agreement, Fremont would send all of its high school students to Eddyville for classes and extra-curricular activities.

Fremont would pay transportation costs and 83 percent of the per-pupil cost the district receives from the state for tuition. Tuition would be approximately $116,449 the first year for 51 students.

A special joint meeting of both boards will be held at 7:30 p.m. today at Fremont to work out details of the sharing agreement prior to public hearings scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday in Eddyville and Monday in Fremont. 12-16-87

Fremont, Eddyville study school sharing pact

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent 12/17/87

FREMONT — Fremont and Eddyville school boards, in a special joint meeting Wednesday night, reviewed a proposed sharing contract with Brian Gruen, attorney for both schools.

Under the proposed agreement, Fremont would send its students in grades 9-12 to Eddyville for classes and extra-curricular activities, paying 83 percent of the per pupil cost for tuition.

There was some discussion about including the junior high (grades 7-8) into the extra-curricular sharing plan. This will need additional work, but was received positively.

The boards are considering having the proposed agreement run for three years unless both boards mutually agree to dissolve the arrangement.

Fremont Board Member Larry McCurdy questioned Eddyville representatives regarding how they would use the additional funds gained by sending the Fremont students to Eddyville.

Eddyville Board President Curtis Jager explained that with extra funds, their procedure is to "ask the administration about what we need."

McCurdy indicated he wanted to see some commitment in the contract that funds would be used to expand course offerings.

Gruen said that since both boards' members were in agreement about using monies for classes, he could place some language in the contract that would indicate an intent to use funds to "expand the curriculum and increase the educational level the students are able to obtain."

Public hearings on the sharing agreement are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday in Eddyville and on Monday in Fremont.

School Board
Proceed with Sharing Program with Fremont

by Ann Ohms 12-17-87

The Eddyville school board voted unanimously Monday evening to approve a resolution of intent to proceed with the process of entering into a 28E agreement with Fremont. This would be whole grade sharing for students in grades 9-12 for education and activities.

At a meeting held in Fremont, Monday evening, their school board also voted unanimously to enter into the agreement.

A joint board meeting between the two schools was held in Fremont Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. A public hearing for Eddyville school patrons will be Friday evening at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria.

In other business the board rescinded an earlier motion and named instructor Betty Hibbs as yearbood advisor.

Fred Spano and Leah Lorber representing the Phase III committee presented plans created by this committee and the board voted to accept this. The money received from the state is to be used for greater learning for students and for teacher effectiveness.

The board approved obtaining bids for both gas and diesel school buses after approving the specs. The regular second meeting of the month in December, the fourth Monday, will not be held.

Eddyville School Board
Eddyville/Fremont 28 E Agreement
Public Meeting
Friday, Dec. 18th
7:00 pm
High School Cafeteria

Joint school hearing brings few comments

12-19-87

EDDYVILLE — The Eddyville and Fremont School boards held a special joint public hearing Friday in Eddyville on a proposed sharing agreement between the two districts.

Approximately one dozen community members listened to an explanation of the agreement, but had few questions or comments.

A public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. Monday in Fremont on the proposed sharing agreement.

Fremont residents voice opinions on sharing plan

By HELEN GRUESER 12/22/87
Courier correspondent

FREMONT — A proposed sharing plan between Fremont and Eddyville schools was supposed to be the focus of Monday's public hearing in Fremont.

But some of about 100 people also voiced preferences for sharing either with Oskaloosa or Hedrick.

Fremont resident Dean Reese said, "A majority of the people and a majority of the kids want to go the other way (Hedrick).

"We are just selling our kids to them (Eddyville), and in the end we'll sell our community down the drain."

Robert Bacon complimented Fremont school board members on the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan, but then asked "if one word could be changed — Eddyville to Oskaloosa."

School Board Member Neal Brown said, "We have to look at the K-12 system, not just the 9-12 course offerings.

"We have to look at the longevity of the Fremont school district, and we have to look at funding."

Allen Holliman favored the Eddyville-Fremont plan, and thanked "both boards for doing this."

Sharon Miller also thanked the Eddyville and Fremont school board members for their work on the sharing plan.

"I know it is a hard decision and you aren't going to make everybody happy," Miller said. "But you have the best interest of our children in mind."

Eddyville and Fremont school board members will vote separately on the proposed plan during their regular meetings Jan. 26.

Under the proposed plan, Fremont students in grades 9-12 would be sent to Eddyville for all classes and extra-curricular activities.

Fremont would be repsonsible for busing its students back and forth from Eddyville, but Eddyville would run an activity bus for Fremont students.

Board Member Larry McCurdy said one of the reasons they are looking at the Eddyville-Fremont plan is because Eddyville is "more of a moderate, rural-type setting."

Mindy Scharff asked why the term of the agreement with Eddyville is three years, and Board Member John Carter said, "I feel we have to give Eddyville some commitment."

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School Board

Continues working on sharing plan with Fremont

by Ann Ohms

The Eddyville and Fremont Community School Boards held a joint meeting in Fremont on December 16. Purpose of the meeting was to work on the draft of the 28E sharing agreement which is proposed to be a one-way whole grade sharing agreement between the two schools. It is proposed that Fremont students in grades 9-12 would attend classes in Eddyville as well as also be involved with extracurricular activities here.

Attorney Brian Gruhn representing both boards has been working with a committee from each of the districts composed of each superintendent and two board members from each school district.

In addition to students from Fremont attending classes here other items in the agreement are: Fremont would be responsible for transportation of their students, extracurricular activities as well as being shared, Eddyville would provide an activity bus which is now available to local students, the agreement would be for three years beginning 1988-89 but could be terminated before then by mutual agreement of both boards. Fremont would pay Eddyville tuition at a rate of 83% of the present cost/pupil, all students in classes here would be subject to the disciplinary and school policies as outlined for Eddyville students.

A public hearing was held in Eddyville on Friday evening. Eddyville Superintendent Tim Dose told those present that he felt the proposed sharing arrangement would be a positive impact on the quality of education offered to all those involved. Dose said it would improve the current programs which are satisfactory but it is always good to keep striving to improve class offerings. He also commended both boards for their efforts and energies expended on the project thus far.

A public hearing was held in Fremont Monday evening.

Fremont persons at that meeting voiced opinions both pro and con to sharing with Eddyville. Questions were answered by Attorney Gruhn, Superintendents Dose of Eddyville and Randy McCaulley of Fremont as well as some board members from both schools.

At the January 25 board meetings each board will vote on acceptance or rejection of the 28E. If both boards vote yes they will hold a joint meeting on January 26 for the signing of the agreement which would go into effect for next school year.

Team plans pilot vocational program

A nine-member team recently met with project coordinator J. Ira Ryan to review the pilot vocational educational program for secondary students in Southern Iowa at Indian Hills Community College.

The vocational program would allow school districts to cooperatively design and administer vocational courses using common facilities, equipment, curriculum, and instructors.

Ottumwa would serve as the regional site for the program.

High schools participating are Blakesburg, Cardinal, Davis County, Fremont, Hedrick, Eddyville and Ottumwa.

The evaluation committee included Iowa high school superintendents and principals, representatives of the Department of Education, the Iowa Association of School Boards, and post-secondary vocational deans and directors.

Eddyville school board sets bond issue vote for Feb. 16

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — Eddyville school patrons will be voting on a $1.19 million bond issue to make several building improvements.

The school board on Monday set Feb. 16 to hold the vote.

The building projects include addition of two new high school classrooms and a multi-purpose room; expansion of the high school shop and art facilities, and a new bus garage.

Three public information meetings regarding the projects are scheduled for Jan. 21, Feb. 9 and 10.

In other business, the board:

- noted there will be an open house Wednesday at 7 p.m. in Eddyville for Fremont students, parents.
- scheduled a joint board meeting with Blakesburg at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in Eddyville to discuss continuing their sharing agreement. Blakesburg currently sends several juniors and seniors to Eddyville for three class periods.
- purchased a new school bus for $32,856.

Fremont residents appear willing to share students with Eddyville

By HELEN GRUESER
Courier correspondent

EDDYVILLE — Most of the Fremont students an parents attending an open house at Eddyville High School Monday night are willing to accept a sharing agreement between the two schools.

"I'm very impressed with the (Eddyville) people," said Fremont parent Shirley VanderHoek. "I'm quite interested in the sharing, and think it's probably very good because Eddyville can offer them a good academic progrem."

"I think the curriculum is excellent," said Fremont parent Norma DeJong.

"I don't see any problem with sharing with Eddyville," said Lonnie Systma, Fremont parent.

"I'm really all for it because I think I'll get a wider spread of learning and activities," said Fremont junior Alicia Perkins.

Fremont freshman Brande Monohon said said she wanted to attend Hedrick, but the school boards have "more or less decided to go here, so I'm trying to get used to the environment."

Approximately 100 Fremont parents and students attended the open house.

The Eddyville and Fremont boards will each vote separately Jan. 25, on whether to enter into a sharing agreement.

The sharing agreement would start in the 1988-89 school year and would run for three years.

If the distrricts decide to share, Fremont will send approximately 50 students in grades 9-12, to Eddyville, and pay 83 percent of the per pupil cost the Fremont district receives from the state for tuition.

Fremont students speak out

Petition protests class-sharing plan

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-14-88

FREMONT — Fremont students are protesting a proposal to share classes with Eddyville.

They presented a petition to superintendent Randy McCaulley this week protesting the Fremont school board's proposed class-sharing plan with Eddyville.

As a result, school board members will meet with the students at 2 p.m. today in the gymnasium to hear the complaints.

If the two school boards approve the sharing proposal, Fremont High School students go to Eddyville.

Student Council President Blaine Oakie, 16, said 75 of 81 students signed the petition.

"Everybody is kind of upset and no one wants to go to Eddyville," Oakie said.

"On Monday, we kind of decided as a group of students that we wanted to do something to say we're against it," added.

Oakie said they had planned to walk out of classes Wednesday morning and not return until they met with school board members.

The students decided against that, Oakie said, because "we thought that would cause too big of a problem for the administration and people involved."

Oakie is pleased that the special school board meeting is scheduled.

He said that when students attend regular meetings, school board members sometimes "make you feel stupid."

And they give the impression "that you're just a stupid kid — hurry up with your question," he said.

Oakie, a junior, believes he'll be spokesman for the students today.

"Almost everyone wants to keep the school open, and we don't like the idea of going to Eddyville," he said.

"If Fremont had gone with Hedrick, it wouldn't have caused that big of a problem."

Fremont school board members in December voted against signing a proposed sharing plan with Hedrick, but still can change their minds before a Feb. 1 deadline.

"Even those against it weren't *that* against it," Oakie said.

Larry Tucker, 18, presented the petition to McCaulley Wednesday morning.

"He said he thought a walkout would be too much of a reaction too soon," Tucker, a senior, said of McCaulley.

McCaulley declined comment on the issue.

Dana Abell, 16, the junior who wrote the petition, said, "Basically we don't have anything against the Eddyville school, we just felt we should be heard."

Abell believes Fremont students signed the petition, "because we feel we should be allowed to stay where we are, or at least have the right to decide what we should do, and not be forced to go somewhere else."

Abell said the students had discussed a sit-in or the walkout, but chose the petition route.

Public hearings have been held on the proposed Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan, and each school district is scheduled to vote on the tentative agreement at simultaneous meetings on Jan. 25.

Fremont students prefer tie with Hedrick

School board member cites Eddyville stability

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

FREMONT — Fremont High School students on Thursday challenged a proposed class sharing plan with Eddyville, and pushed for reconsideration of a sharing plan with Hedrick.

Blaine Oakie

The special meeting of the Fremont school board was called after 75 of 81 Fremont students signed a petition opposing the Fremont-Eddyville plan, and asking to be heard.

Fremont Student Council President Blaine Oakie, 16, reminded board members that student and community surveys listed Hedrick as the second choice, if it wasn't possible for the Fremont school to exist as it is.

"As a representative myself, the majority should rule," Oakie added.

Oakie, a junior, asked board members to reconsider the Hedrick sharing proposal, citing the success of the combined Hedrick-Fremont "Rebels" sports teams.

The boys basketball team stands 9-1, while the girl cagers are 6-4.

Oakie said Fremont's school board has mislead the community for the past two years by "mentally preparing us for a greater sharing program or future merger with Hedrick."

He said the academic and athletic advantages have been "totally disregarded."

Under the proposed plan, Fremont High School students would attend classes in Eddyville.

Board Member Neal Brown said the board switched sharing talks from Hedrick to Eddyville "because it would be a more stable move."

Board Member Larry McCurdy said the board has to look at "the whole school, not just you high school students."

Fremont student Larry Tucker asked why the sharing question couldn't be decided by a community vote.

Board Member John Carter said "too many personal reasons and not enough educational reasons would enter into the vote."

Asked if the board has made its final decision, Brown said: "We still have a lot of information to go over, and we don't vote until Jan. 25."

Fremont student Clarice Beekhuizen drew student applause when she reminded the board that the proposed three-year agreement with Eddyville could be ended at any time if the two districts agree.

"If you can terminate the agreement at any time, why not go to Hedrick and try it out?"

Carter again emphasized that the talks shifted back to Eddyville for "academics, financial and longevity" reasons.

Fremont student Liana Woodard asked if Hedrick was "out of the question?"

Brown said the Fremont board hasn't been approached by the Hedrick board since Hedrick voted to sign the agremeent and Fremont voted against it.

Although Hedrick school board members voted to sign the agreement, they told Fremont "they had no intention of singing it," Brown said.

"If you're concerned about education, why not ask us about it?" Fremont student Rhonda Rupprecht asked.

Carter said that as board members, "I think we've got to listen to everyone in the community."

Suggesting that a number of families would move into the Hedrick district if the Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan is approved, Fremont student Rhonda Rupprecht noted: "There won't be a Fremont at all."

Fremont student Brenda Whisler charged: "This is not sharing. You're just giving up."

Fremont student Mike Helm added, "Sharing is give and take.

"This is not sharing — they're taking our students."

Student questions

High school students from Fremont and Hedrick have been sharing extra-curricular activities for several years.
On Thursday they were sharing a common concern.

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Courier photo by Jim Hamann

UNITED THEY STAND: Fremont High School senior Bob Fairchild and Hedrick High School freshman Vicki Harris join hands outside the school building in Fremont on Thursday afternoon to show their opposition to the proposed class-sharing plan between the Fremont and Eddyville school districts.

Southern Iowa

Fremont students question abandonment of Hedrick sharing

By STEVE WEBBER 1-15-88
Courier area editor

FREMONT — High school students from Fremont and Hedrick have been sharing extra-curricular activities for years.

Roger Sullivan

But on Thursday they were sharing something else — questioning why Fremont has abandoned a proposed Fremont-Hedrick class sharing plan.

Fremont is considering a proposal to share school programs with Eddyville. Both schools make the final decision Jan. 25.

Rusty Zook

Freed by "excuse notes" from parents, Hedrick students were allowed to skip their classes, trekking to Fremont to help their friends.

Todd Deutschle

About 32 Hedrick students met in front of Fremont High School just before the Fremont's school board was to discuss the issue with its students.

But the Hedrick students couldn't get in — no visitor passes, school officials said.

"Please move off school property," said high school principal Doug Englert.

They did — without incident — but waited in the cold for a chance to get involved in the warm discussion inside the gym.

When the afternoon meeting recessed to allow Fremont bus students to leave, the Hedrick students were still outside, holding support banners.

"We wanted to show our support for the Fremont students," said Hedrick Student Council President Roger Sullivan.

"We know what it's like to be forced into a situation you don't want," referring to a petition that calling for a proposed merger vote between Hedrick and Pekin schools. That merger question is in the hands of the Iowa Supreme Court.

Sullivan said the main reason Hedrick students are supporting their Fremont counterparts is because the two schools currently share sport activities.

Hedrick senior Rusty Zook, 17, thought the Fremont students had been cheated.

"They (Fremont students) want to go to Hedrick, but the school board won't listen," he charged.

Fremont Student Council President Blaine Oakie said the Hedrick student support "gave me chills and it made me feel good."

Oakie said a poll of Fremont students showed that 60 to 65 percent favor the Fremont-Hedrick sharing plan.

Hedrick sophomore Todd Deutschle, 16, favors the Fremont-Hedrick plan and "didn't think it was really nice" to be excluded from the first part of the meeting.

When some Fremont students wanted to continue the meeting after the recess, board members agreed to stay for another half-hour.

The Hedrick students then got to come in out of the cold.

Fremont student Bob Fairchild pointed to the Hedrick students when he asked Fremont board members:

"Look at these people. If they didn't care about us, why would they be here?"

Board Member Larry McCurdy apologized to the students for starting the Fremont-Hedrick sports sharing plan and not following through with the academic-sharing plan.

Board Member John Carter told the students that when he went to Fremont High School, "We hated Hedrick — we loved to hate Hedrick in sports.

"If you had suggested sharing with Hedrick 20 years ago, they would have thought it was the end of the world."

Carter said the Fremont and Hedrick students had formed "a terrific bond" through the sports programs.

"I don't know why in a short time you wouldn't have the same bond" with Eddyville students, he offered.

Fremont student Rex Butler asked board members if their younger-day personal feelings were affecting their adult decisions.

"Absolutely not," Carter replied.

"I married one," noted Board Member Robert Norris.

"It's no secret, I hate to give it up," McCurdy said of the high school students who would have classes in Eddyville under the proposal.

"But we have to give something up to save what we've got," he added, referring to the Fremont elementary and middle schools.

McCurdy suggested that if he had voted on the Fremont-Hedrick plan before the 30-day waiting period rerquired by law, "the Hedrick thing probably would have passed."

Fremont's sharing plan must be submitted to the Iowa Department of Education by Feb. 1 for classes in 1988-89.

McCurdy said that because of "major changes" suggested by Hedrick board members shortly before the vote, more public hearings and another 30-day waiting period would have been necessary.

"Hedrick-Fremont doesn't look like it's going to go through," McCurdy added.

Carter stressed that they are looking at sharing, "because we're going to be pushed back to the wall financially and academically."

"Hedrick was our No. 1 choice and we pursued it," he said.

"We rode the horse as long as we could ride it, and covered all the bases, and decided to look toward Eddyville."

1-15-88

Courier photo by Jim Hamann

PASSIONED PLEA: Fremont High School student Rex Butler expresses his feelings as he gestures to the Fremont school board during Thursday's special meeting.

Fremont protests create no ill will in Eddyville

By JOHN STANG
Courier staff writer 1-16-88

Eddyville school Superintendent Tim Dose isn't offended that Fremont High School students would rather share classes with Hedrick than with his school.

"I'm not surprised," Dose said. "It's understandable."

"They're voicing loyalty to their friends in Hedrick. They're not throwing stones at us and making derogatory remarks," Dose said.

Almost all of Fremont's student have signed a petition opposing the Fremont-Eddyville class-sharing plan.

Ten or 11 Fremont students stayed out of class and were suspended Friday as part of a protest against the plan.

"They're good kids, and they're entitled to their opinion," said Eddyville school board President Curtis Jager.

"If they decide to go ahead (with the Eddyville-Fremont plan), I don't anticipate any problems," Jager added.

Dose, Eddyville school Board Member Ron Shafer and former Board Member Michelle Waggoner pointed to a Monday open house at Eddyville High School.

About 100 Fremont parents and students attended, and most seemed willing to participate in the class-sharing agreement.

Shafer: "The people in attendance there seem to be enthusiastic."

Waggoner: "I saw kids there, and they seemed to be happy."

Dose, Shafer and Waggoner also said the Eddyville school board has a good relationship with the Fremont board.

Eddyville residents seem content to watch the Fremont controversy from the sidelines and haven't talked much about it so far, school officials said.

Meanwhile, Pekin Superintendent James Rood isn't sure how the Fremont-Hedrick-Eddyville controversy will affect a pending merger vote by the Hedrick and Fremont districts.

"If I knew the outcome (of the Fremont-Eddyville situation), I'd know what to say," Rood said.

"All we're doing is sitting and observing."

Southern Iowa

Hedrick ready to argue merger question before high court

By STEVE WEBBER 1-16-88
Courier area editor

HEDRICK — The Hedrick school district is ready to argue its case to the Iowa Supreme Court.

The school board's attorney, Kenneth Keith of Ottumwa, met the deadline on Friday. That's when he mailed legal briefs in Hedrick's appeal of a Keokuk County Court decision over a proposed vote on the merger of the Hedrick and Pekin schools.

Hedrick is appealing an August 1987 decision by Judge James Jenkins of Albia, who said that Southern Prairie Area Education Agency was correct in scheduling a merger vote in the two districts.

Ottumwa attorney Rich Gaumer, who is representing the AEA, now has 30 days to file briefs stating the AEA's position.

Keith argues that Jenkins "was in error" by saying that the AEA complied with a new Iowa law pertaining to school reorganizations.

The law required AEAs to draw reorganization plans for all schools with enrollments of less than 300 students.

Keith's brief asks the Iowa Supreme Court to rule in favor of Hedrick and void the reorganization petition which prompted the legal battle.

A petition with 275 signatures calling for the Hedrick-Pekin merger was filed with the AEA on July 7, 1986.

Another list of 551 people objecting to the merger was later submitted to the AEA.

Keith argues that the AEA didn't adopt a reorganization plan for the 26 schools in its jurisdiction until July 8, 1986 — one day after the pro-merger petition was filed with the AEA.

Keith argues that the record "clearly shows a lack of compliance" with Iowa law by the AEA.

Although the petition was filed the day before the hearing, Don Roseberry, AEA administrator, told The Courier Friday night "the board didn't know anything about it before the meeting."

He noted that board members had given preliminary approval of the plan at their June meeting.

The Courier published a front page story on July 5, 1986, detailing the proposed plan.

Keith also argues:

- That the only formal plan the AEA had on file at the time the pro-merger petition was filed, was a general study of school districts — called "The Rossi Report of 1980" — which did not include reorganization plans.
- That the AEA plan was adopted on July 8, 1986, didn't include alternate plans of reorganization for the Hedrick school district, as required by Iowa law.
- That the AEA violated the law by "merely contacting superintendents by telephone in each of the 26 school districts to see if changes had been made in their facility since the 1980 Rossi Report," instead of conducting required extensive studies.
- That the AEA failed to accurately describe, by appropriate legal description, the boundaries of the Hedrick school district and omitted an area of about 200 acres.

Roseberry said the legal description was obtained from the Keokuk County auditor.

However, the auditor and AEA later discovered the Pekin and Hedrick districts hadn't properly filed papers detailing a land trade made "several years ago."

- That the AEA failed to do any follow-up reorganization studies of the Hedrick situation as is required by law.
- That the AEA didn't conduct interviews with Hedrick school officials prior to the Aug. 12, 1986, meeting at which it decided to put the question to a vote of people in each district.

Roseberry said the AEA board members "have no fear whatsoever of the Supreme Court."

"As far as we're concerned," he continued, "we have followed every letter of the law. We have no reason to believe what we did wasn't accurate and timely."

Roseberry added that most of Hedrick's appeal arguments are the same as those made in district court.

Keith wrote that the Aug. 12, 1986, decision "was made in approximately six minutes," following a regularly scheduled AEA board meeting, "and without taking or listing any formal testimony, but merely after allowing some oral argument."

Iowa law allows AEA's up to 10 days to review reorganization petitions after the public hearing.

Dissatisfied Fremont students boycott classes

By JEFF BURNHAM
Courier staff writer

FREMONT — A Friday protest may turn into a Monday suspension for 11 Fremont High School students who think their school board isn't listening to them.

And other students are organizing a plan to support their classmates and may walk out of school on Monday.

"We kind of wanted to show them (board members) that we do mean business," said senior Steve Shepherd, a boycotter.

The protest came on the heels of Thursday's meeting between the Fremont board and students. The students had petitioned board members to hear their request — share classes with Hedrick, not Eddyville.

The Fremont and Eddyville school boards are considering a class-sharing proposal that would place Fremont high school students in Eddyville.

Board members will vote — in separate meetings — on the proposal Jan 25.

But the students — and some community members — want to share classes with Hedrick because the schools have been sharing sports programs.

The Friday boycott was started because Thursday's comments to board members "just went in one ear and out the other," Shepherd said.

About 20 students were in the hallway, "talking about a walkout and then we just decided to do it," said freshman Holly Shepherd.

Steve Shepherd said a few minutes passed when high school principal Doug Englert warned students they had three minutes to return to class.

Nine students went inside.

The remaining 11 students stood outside, held protest signs, waved to passersby and listened to music.

Fremont superintendent Randy McCaulley said they will receive "in-house" suspensions — detention time — if they return to school on Monday.

They will be treated "just like when a student doesn't show up for classes," McCaulley added.

Courier photo by Jim Hamann

PROTEST: Fremont students carried their protest to school on Friday. Standing outside the school are, from left, Charlie Pearson, Steve Shepherd, Tianna Shepherd and Michelle Carmer.

Four Fremont adults joined the students' protest off-and-on during the day.

"I think the kids are right," said Debbie Reese, who encouraged her junior high daughter to join the protestors.

She didn't.

Another parent, Linda Clarke, said she's concerned about the proposal because "Eddyville has a reputation of being a bad school at times."

Fremont Student Council President Blaine Oakie told protestors Friday morning the boycott "wasn't a good idea."

By mid-afternoon he had changed his mind.

"Now we've got to get more organized," he said, as he and others began planning for a possible boycott on Monday.

Senior Larry Tucker said they are confident they can get 95 percent of the 56 high school students to go along with the idea.

"We've got to stick up for them" Oakie said, referring to his 11 classmates.

Others facing suspension are: Ron Rupprecht, a senior; Charlie Pearson, Tim Plate, Keith Moore, juniors; Kyl West, Jared Tschetter, sophomores; Tianna Shepherd, Michelle Carmer, Tracey Powell, freshmen.

"All of our parents are behind us," Moore said.

Fremont residents have been protesting the sharing proposals since October, when residents protested a plan to share classes with Hedrick.

Although Hedrick's school board approved the plan, four of five Fremont board members voted against it in December.

But the new proposal, which would put Fremont High School students in Eddyville, has drawn more response.

Forrest Powell, 48, of Fremont said he "got the impression that board members were telling students, 'Take Eddyville or stick it.'"

But school board member Robert Norris said he and his colleagues did listen, adding "no minds will be made up until we vote."

Iowa law says Fremont has until Feb. 1 to submit a sharing plan to the Iowa Department of Education for 1988-89 classes.

Robert Sterling, the only Fremont board member who voted for the Hedrick plan, told The Courier that other board members "are leaning to Eddyville."

Small school struggles

Parents join class sharing battle

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-18-88

FREMONT — About 50 Fremont people gathered Sunday to plan a fight of the proposed Fremont-Eddyville class sharing plan.

Feed salesman Jerry Tschetter helped organize the Sunday meeting to see what opponents of the Fremont-Eddyville plan can do to change the minds of school board members, who will vote on the proposed agreement on Jan. 25.

The group formed a committee, intends to hire a lawyer, and plans to demonstrate its feelings by picketing for the students and wearing arm bands to show opposition to the Fremont-Eddyville plan.

The group also passed the hat for donations to cover rental of the meeting room and legal fees.

Changing the minds of school board members before the Jan. 25 vote is "Plan A," Tschetter said. "That is the simplest solution."

But Tschetter believes that even if school board members vote to sign the Fremont-Eddyville plan, "I don't believe we're totally whipped — that's why we need legal counsel.

"Plan B is what we do if the school board signs the Eddyville agreement," he said.

When asked if that meant the group supports the Fremont-Hedrick plan, Tschetter said, "Let's let that issue come up at a later date.

"There's a lot of frustration in the community that Eddyville is not the way to go," he said.

"It's not the best opportunity for our children educationally or socially."

Blaine Oakie

Jerry Tschetter

Saying he's proud of the way Fremont students conducted themselves at Thursday's special school board meeting, Tschetter said, "I'm concerned as a parent that the kids not show us up."

Dean Reese held up a copy of the letter he sent to the Iowa Department of Education requesting that his children be allowed to appeal out of the sharing plan, and urged the crowd to do the same.

"It can be to any adjacent school district," Reese said, "which includes Oskaloosa, Ottumwa and Sigourney."

Dennis Brown said he filed a similar appeal letter with the state on Jan. 11.

Copies of the letters are forwarded to the affected school districts.

"If we can flood them with paperwork," Tschetter said, "maybe we can change their minds a little bit."

Group members also were encouraged to phone school board members with their oppositon.

No school administrators or school board members were invited to the meeting, "because we didn't want to invite them in here to argue with them," Tschetter said.

When contacted after the meeting, Board Member Larry McCurdy said the gathering "was an exercise of the free rights they do have."

He said that "the way I understand the law," any parents wishing to appeal out of a Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan would have to do so before Jan. 25 — when the Fremont and Eddyville school boards will vote separately on the proposed agreement.

As the meeting concluded, the group voted to appoint the meeting organizers as members of a committee that will contact a lawyer and present petitions to the school board.

Named to that committee were Tschetter, Reese, Cynthia Van Zetten, Forrest Powell and Martha Scharff.

"The school board doesn't care about what the majority feels," Scharff said.

"We've had petition after petition and I think we need legal counsel," said Gary Van Zetten. "They're not doing what they (school board members) were elected to do."

When asked how many people would favor a community vote on the sharing question, a majority of hands went up.

"We've done all the talking and taken straw votes," said Dave Krile, who suggested the group attend the Jan. 25 school board meeting and wear arm bands.

The group has tentatively scheduled another meeting for 8 p.m. Wednesday.

'Rebel' armbands to signal Fremont dissatisfaction

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor

FREMONT — Fremont High School students on Sunday were discouraged from walking out of classes today to protest a proposed Fremont-Eddyville school sharing plan.

Feed salesman Jerry Tschetter and student council President Blaine Oakie each made that plea at a special meeting of parents and students.

"The purpose of school is education," Tschetter said, "and you need to be inside to get it."

School administrators suspended 11 Fremont students indefinitely after they failed to attend class on Friday.

"I hope no one else does" walk out of classes, Oakie said. "But I'm not saying that it's wrong either."

But Tschetter said the students should feel free to demonstrate all they want before and after classes.

More than one parent suggested parents should be out picketing instead of their children doing it.

The Sunday meeting group first suggested parents and students wear green arm bands to show their opposition to the Fremont-Eddyville plan.

"They should be black to symbolize the death of the high school," Oakie chimed in.

The group agreed, however that the arm bands should be red and white — team colors for the Hedrick-Fremont Rebels.

And organizers urged students to wear them to classes and people to wear them to the Jan. 25 school board meeting.

Oakie also told the crowd that because a teacher in-service workshop is planned on Thursday, a bus has been arranged for Fremont students to visit Eddyville High School "to see if they like it, ha, or don't like it."

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Parents take place of kids on Fremont picket line

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-19-88

FREMONT — Six parents took the places of their children on the picket line in Fremont Monday to protest a proposed school sharing agreement with Eddyville.

Faced with suspension and possible expulsion, Fremont High School students attended classes on the first day of the semester.

The students apparently honored the wishes of student council president Blaine Oakie and feed salesman Jerry Tschetter.

Tschetter organized a special meeting on Sunday of parents opposed to the Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan, at which he and Oakie asked the students not to honor a planned walk-out on classes.

"All of our students are in classes today," said superintendent Randy McCaulley on Monday.

Students registered their protest in a different manner, however, wearing red and white arm bands, and home-made T-shirts with gravestones depicting what they see as the death of their high school.

Students made their way to classes Monday, cheering parents who carried signs in the early morning fog.

"I think it's great," said student Larry Tucker of the parents. "They're (the school administrators) trying to pressure us into not walking out of classes, and they're (parents) carrying the signs for us."

Parent Keith Moore said, "The kids are standing up for their rights. It's hard to tell your kid not to walk out of class for something they think is right."

Moore is no stranger to picket lines, as he's been on strike from Clow Corporation in Oskaloosa since May 8, 1987.

"I've been out since May 8 for something I think is right," Moore said. "How can I tell my kid he's wrong?

"But I told him to go to school, and I'd carry the sign."

Moore was quick to add, however, "I'm not saying Hedrick is the best choice. I'm just saying the students should have a choice."

Janetta Shepherd carried a sign saying, "No Crime — No Punishment."

Shepherd is protesting the indefinite suspension of 11 Fremont High School students who boycotted class on Friday.

"We have a right to protest as people and human beings," she said.

"If they (school administrators) give them (students) in-school suspensions, I'll take their place" carrying signs.

Forrest Powell said the parents would carry signs in front of the school "as long as it takes."

"We'll be here all day, except to go get coffee," he said.

Parent Debbie Reese expected to see more parents carrying signs Monday, but was pleased that as many as 50 came to a meeting on Sunday to oppose the Fremont-Eddyville plan.

That group of parents is hiring a lawyer, and urging other Fremont parents to appeal their children out of the sharing plan by writing letters to the Iowa Department of Education.

They hope to change the minds of school board members with phone calls and paperwork before they vote on the sharing plan Jan. 25.

Cynthia VanZetten, the mother of student council president Oakie, said the group had consulted with a lawyer Monday morning, and would talk to an attorney again today before making a final decision on who would represent the group.

VanZetten said the attorney fees would be paid by donations by taxpayers in the district, with the possibility of fundraisers planned to help the group meet expenses.

Courier photo by Steve Webber

PARENTS TAKE CHARGE: Four parents of Fremont High School students hold protest signs near the school Monday morning.

Glimpse of Eddyville school pleases Fremont students

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-22-88

EDDYVILLE — The 28 Fremont High School students who visited Eddyville High School on Thursday appeared pleased with what they saw.

Fremont students may be going to Eddyville if a class sharing agreement is approved by the respective district's school boards on Monday.

Fremont senior Lisa Miller said the Eddyville administrators and students "made me feel welcome."

"I think they have a nice building and they have a lot of nice things they can offer to us," Miller said.

Miller understands why some of her classmates would rather go to Hedrick than Eddyville.

"I hate to lose our school at Fremont, too," she said. "You've got to come here with an open mind. You'll get more academically."

Miller didn't sign a petition last week that resulted in a special meeting of school board members with students who oppose the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan.

"If the board didn't want to listen, they wouldn't have been at that meeting in the first place," Miller said.

"I think the students aren't listening to the board. They're set in their minds."

Miller favors the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan.

"I feel that if the students knew everything the board knows, they would be in a place to make a decision," Miller said.

Lisa Miller

Alicia Perkins

"The people of the community put them (school board members) in to make a decision. We have to trust the board."

Miller believes each student is entitled to his opinion on future sharing plans, "but you don't have to cut other schools down in the process."

"You can always make new friends," she said. "You can't always make a new education."

Fremont senior Alicia Perkins also chose not to sign the Fremont student petition, and enjoyed her Eddyville visit.

"I was late for my first hour class, but they (Eddyville students) said 'Hi,' and made me feel welcome.

"I love it here."

Perkins said the Eddyville High School "was so different."

"At Fremont, you only get three minutes between classes. There are so many people here, but everyone is nice and says 'Hi,' " she added.

Angie Norris

Jami McCurdy

Perkins said that talk of the sharing plan at her high school has "made some enemies."

"I talked about it with a friend," Perkins said. "I respect her opinion and she respects mine.

"Everyone has a right to stand up for what they believe in. I can see where they're coming from, but I think they should give Eddyville a chance."

Perkins believes Fremont students will warm to Eddyville students as much as they have to Hedrick students — through sports.

Being a cheerleader for the Hedrick-Fremont Rebels, "through it all we became pretty good friends — that's what a friend is," Perkins said.

Would she feel the same if she were a junior coming to Eddyville as a senior next year?

"I don't know," she said. "I made a lot of good friends at Hedrick, but Eddyville has neat classes and a LEAP reading program I really like. I think I'd like a chance to come over here."

Fremont freshmen Angie Norris and Jami McCurdy signed the Fremont student petition opposing the Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan, but wanted to see the Eddyville school.

"I like it. It's nice and the kids are fun," Norris said of Eddyville.

She signed the petition, "because I wanted Fremont to stay the way it is."

"But that's not going to happen," she said. "That doesn't mean coming over here is going to hurt me."

What does she think of the controversy surrounding Fremont's sharing decisions?

"I've never seen anything like it," Norris said. "Every day somebody is standing out there (in front of the Fremont school) with a sign."

Norris said the big difference she noticed between Fremont and Eddyville high schools was "walking through the hallways."

Jami McCurdy said Eddyville High School appeared "pretty fun."

"There's more people," she said. "And I just like people, I guess."

Would it take time to adjust to classes at Eddyville?

"A little while," McCurdy said. "But I think the students will get used to it."

Eddyville kids extend welcome to newcomers

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-22-88

EDDYVILLE — Eddyville High School students appeared anxious to welcome about 30 visitors from Fremont High School on Thursday.

The entire Fremont High School could be attending classes at Eddyville next year if school board members in each district approve a class sharing agreement on Monday.

But Eddyville students are no strangers to sharing plans. They've been sharing classes with Blakesburg juniors and seniors this year.

And most Eddyville students interviewed Thursday believe the transition for Fremont students would be just as smooth.

When the Fremont students entered the gymnasium on Thursday and saw between 50 and 60 Eddyville students sitting on the gymnasium floor and bleachers, "no one would set down at first," Eddyville senior Molly Morrissey said.

"But once we got together and started talking, everything went fine."

Morrissey is "bothered" by the comments of some Fremont students who protested the sharing agreement last week, "but took no offense."

She was more offended by comments from some of the Fremont parents, "especially the mother who supports her children staying out of school."

Morrissey believes an Eddyville-Fremont sharing agreement will work as well as the sharing agreement with Blakesburg.

"I think we all made a lot of new friends and we're glad to have them here," Morrissey said. "It helps everyone."

Eddyville junior Michelle Kelsey was one of the students who escorted Fremont students through the school on Thursday.

"I think everything went real well," Kelsey said. "They asked about the tardy policy.

"One girl I was escorting was a senior. We came into my advanced chemistry class, and she was helping me because she'd had the class last year."

Kelsey — who believes the proposed sharing agreement with Fremont will work — was offended that the Fremont parents "are not letting the students make up their own mind."

Blakesburg senior Jon Walker has been attending classes at Eddyville the first half of the day this year, and admits being "scared" the first two weeks.

Jon Walker

Rachel Boley

Molly Morrissey

Michelle Kelsey

"When I came over here, I had a B average. Now I'm making straight A's. We get along better," he said.

Walker said a similar class-day visit planned for Blakesburg students last year helped the transition to a new school.

"At first, I didn't think anybody wanted to come over here," Walker said. "Nobody knew what to expect.

"For the first two weeks, we came over here and thought we were going to get beat up. But I really enjoy coming here. The people are nice and we are liked. It has worked for me."

His advice to the Fremont visitors?

"Get used to it and then make a decision," he said. "I stuck it out."

Blakesburg junior Rachel Boley agrees with Walker.

"It was just different being with new people here," she said. "Just because they're different."

The big difference Boley noticed was "the grading scale was different," and she admits "I have to study harder."

Boley said she was "nervous for about a week. But we got to know the people in the classes."

Eddyville students are "really friendly," she noted. "And you'll get over your nervousness if you don't say Eddyville is terrible, but have an open mind."

Administrators plan for class sharing

By STEVE WEBBER 1-22-88
Courier area editor

EDDYVILLE — Eddyville High School administrators favor a proposed class sharing plan with Fremont, and would welcome their high school students.

"What's important is what is best for the kids," said Superintendent Tim Dose.

"It will work if both parties want it to work."

Principal Jack Shupe said it doesn't matter where a student is from because "we try to do the best to educate every student who walks through the door."

"We're positive we can offer Fremont students more competition in class."

Shupe called the Thursday visit by Fremont students "a good experience," even if the agreement isn't approved.

Dose: "They exchanged thoughts, and that's what education is all about."

"We're trying to take an objective view" of opposition to the plan in Fremont, he said, adding those reactions are "not surprising."

"They have a right to be heard, and they have a right to have their questions answered."

Dose believes an open house for 85 to 100 Fremont parents and students last week helped relieve some Fremont fears and concerns.

"Their anxiety and fears are very, very real," Shupe said of the Fremont students.

"As educators, we have to approach that and deal with that from today on."

While briefing Eddyville students on the Fremont visit, Shupe said he got "a feeling from everybody that it was OK."

"Our students want the Fremont students here," Shupe said.

Tim Dose

Jack Shupe

Dose said a "key provision" of the sharing plan is that both school boards agreed to send any differences to an arbitrator.

An Eddyville activity bus would take rural Fremont students to their homes, and Fremont residents to central locations in the city.

Fremont would handle all other transportation to and from school each day.

Asked about concerns by Fremont parents of "chronic discipline problems," Shupe said he hasn't had "one-tenth the discipline problems I had at the last school I was at."

Dose also dismissed some Fremont claims that added curriculum offerings are "just stretched-out versions" of classes offered at Fremont.

"That's not the case," Dose said. "We're talking about two entirely different classes for things like advanced chemistry — it's a whole new ballgame."

The proposed agreement calls for Fremont to pay Eddyville 83 percent of the per-pupil unit of state aid — or $2,724 per Fremont student last year.

But Fremont would receive 1.1 percent of that per-pupil aid for every student involved in the sharing.

Eddyville will have no trouble making room for about 50 Fremont students next year.

Eddyville has 265 students in a building designed for 500 students.

"In a small school district, more students means a better education," Shupe said.

"Teachers would have more time to prepare for classes."

Shupe sees that as a key issue, adding that Eddyville's current class numbers are at the point "almost where we need two sections, but not quite."

Both compared the fears and anxiety of Fremont people with Blakesburg people who were looking at a sharing agreement with Eddyville last year.

"They're both pretty similar," Dose said. "They don't know what to expect next year."

Blakesburg and Eddyville school boards recently agreed to extend the sharing agreement into next year.

"The cooperation of the parents and kids has been phenomenal," Dose said of the Blakesburg agreement.

"Some students were hesitant to get involved," Shupe said.

Dose said the Blakseburg students are carrying a 3.1 — or B — average, "and that's better than we expected."

Shupe said,"I think the students have meshed together very well."

Eddyville sets vote on school bond issue

Eddyville school residents who want to vote in the Feb. 16 school bond issue should make sure they are registered.

The proposed $1.19 million bond issue will be for building improvements.

People who have moved or aren't registered by 5 p.m. Feb. 5 at the county auditor's office may register at the Eddyville Civic Center, according to Auditor Mary Gaskill.

Mail-in registrations must be received or postmarked by Feb. 1, but change-of-address postcard forms will be accpted through Feb. 5.

Eddyville City Clerk Max Jones will be the deputy mobile registrar for the Wapello County portion of the Eddyville school district.

Gaskill also said that people planning to spend $250 or more on the election must file a campaign finance disclosure report.

The reports, available at the county auditor's office, also list guidelines for yard signs and published political advertising. Gaskill said these guidelines must be observed regardless of how much money a person or group spends.

Gaskill added that the reports are due five day prior to the Feb. 16 election.

1-22-88

Fremont crowd continues work in opposition to sharing pact

By STEVE WEBBER
Courier area editor 1-22-88

FREMONT — About 90 Fremont people met Wednesday night to continue planning the fight against a proposed school sharing agreement with Eddyville.

Committee member Martha Scharff said Oskaloosa attorney Robert Clements answered people's questions.

"Basically he recommended that people send in their letters of appeal to the Iowa Department of Education," Scharff said.

Appeal letters must be sent to the state Department of Education by Monday, and should list the reasons a parent wants to appeal out of the proposed Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan.

Clements and Fremont feed salesman Jerry Tschetter will present information on the group's position at the Monday meeting of the Fremont school board.

Both the Fremont and Eddyville school boards will be voting on the proposed agreement that night.

Tschetter helped organize a Sunday meeting of Fremont people opposed to the sharing plan.

He said they've raised a "considerable amount" of money for the legal fund, and hope to raise more.

Tschetter called it "significant" that a poll at the meeting revealed parents or guardians were there representing 48 percent of the Fremont students in grades 6-11.

"Some people just signed their names to pledges with no amount on them," Scharff said.

The group has opened an account at Farmers Savings Bank in Fremont for the "Save Our School Fund."

Scharff said they planned no more demonstrations, but did encourage everyone to attend the Monday school board meeting.

Tschetter said "two important things" have happened since Sunday's meeting: "The poll, and support we've received from parents in Cedar, whose children currently attend Eddyville High School."

Tschetter said petitions will continue to be solicited before they're presented to school board members at Monday's meeting.

"Community support is growing," Tschetter said. "Hopefully by Monday evening our issue will be resolved."

Letters to the editor

Not all options considered by school

1-22-88

Editor, The Courier:

We, as a group of concerned citizens, parents, and taxpayers of Fremont Community School District, who are opposing the 28E sharing agreement with Eddyville, urge you to be present at the open school board meeting scheduled for Monday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. to voice your opinion and to help make a statement in numbers.

We feel this action is being pushed through too hastily, without all possible alternatives being taken into consideration.

At this point in time no sharing program for the '88-'89 school year would be better than one that has been signed without all possible issues or potential problems considered. As of now we have a maximum of three years, 1992, to meet current state Department of Education standards.

Our school board has stated that they do not have to respond to or act upon the wishes of the majority of the members of the school district. Three separate polls have been taken by the school or school board. Results indicated Eddyville as third choice out of three options offered.

Please take a moment to consider not only the future of our school system, but also the future of our community. This decision will effect all members of our community from ages 6 to 100. Monday is your opportunity to share your support for our cause. Please be there.

Jerry Tschetter
Cynthia VanZetten
Martha Scharff
Dean Reese
Forrest Powell

Hedrick people owed an apology

Editor, The Courier:

I was both disturbed and disappointed by the Jan. 13 article concerning the proposed merger of the Hedrick and Pekin school districts. I was disappointed by the lack of objectivity of the article and disturbed by the uncalled-for remarks of several of the Area Education Agency board members.

Especially distasteful was the comment by Board Member Dick Wilke who was quoted as saying "maybe this will slow them up," referring to Hedrick's court appeal. Is Mr. Wilke suggesting that the Hedrick district should not have the constitutional right to appeal the decision of a lower court? I thought those rights were among the "inalienable rights" possessed by all Americans.

The comment by Mrs. Markham about the awareness of the people of the Hedrick school district as to how much is being spent by the Hedrick school board is almost as offensive. In fact, I would call it meddling in the affairs of the Hedrick district.

The members of the AEA board of directors are elected to represent all schools equally, free of bias. I have heard it said by several officials of the Hedrick Community School District that they feel they are not being treated fairly by the AEA in this matter. After reading some of the comments in this article, I think the complaints of the people of Hedrick appear to have quite a bit of validity.

The people of Hedrick are owed a public apology for these statements.

Roger H. Davies
Milton

Fremont, Eddyville vote to share classes

By STEVE WEBBER
and HELEN GRUESER
Courier staff writers 1-26-88

Eddyville and Fremont school boards on Monday agreed to sign a three-year agreement that will send Fremont High School students to Eddyville for the 1988-89 school year.

In separate meetings, Eddyville school board voted 6-0 to sign the agreement, while Fremont agreed to sign by a 4-1 vote.

Almost 200 people attended the Fremont school board meeting in the high school gymnasium.

Bob Sterling was the lone Fremont school board member to oppose the sharing plan, saying he prefers "the option of Oskaloosa."

Sterling said his vote "had nothing to do with the Hedrick-Fremont sharing plan," which Fremont board members voted not to sign in December.

Sterling said the issue of class sharing "came down to a question of us keeping our elementary school."

> ***'The kids have got to make it work now.'***
>
> *– Neal Brown*
> *Fremont board chairman*

Fremont school board members have been considering class sharing options with Eddyville, Oskaloosa and Hedrick for nearly three years.

Sterling was "relieved" the board members had finally approved a sharing agreement, saying he's "hopeful" it works.

"The kids have got to make it work now," added Fremont board chairman Neal Brown.

Jerry Tschetter, who helped organize a group of Fremont parents opposed to the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan, said the board vote "basically came as no surprise."

Tschetter was disappointed the board didn't direct more discussion to a proposal by his group's attorney, Robert Clements of Oskaloosa.

Clements had suggested the board postpone voting on the Eddyville-Fremont sharing plan this year, and investigate what he called the "Clearfield Model."

"We just want to call 'time out,'" Tschetter said.

Clements explained that the Clearfield school district signed sharing agreements with three other school districts, giving parents and students "a choice."

What's the next step?

"Basically we have legal counsel and I'm sure there will be further appeals on this," Tschetter said. "I guess it's on to Plan B."

At Clements' suggestion, the Fremont board passed an amendment that says the two school boards will conduct public hearings if the three-year sharing plan is extended beyond three years or if it's proposed to send Fremont junior high students to Eddyville.

Eddyville board members had approved the original agreement before hearing about Fremont's amendment.

Eddyville again voted unanimously to approve the agreement after hearing about Fremont's amendment by telephone.

Fremont school board members listened to "new issues" from a handful of spectators, saying "this is not a public hearing."

Melvin Reed drew applause when he asked board members, "What's the hurry?"

Brown said Iowa schools must meet new curriculum standards by July 1989.

Fremont Board Member John Carter called the threat of stricter standards and future mandated school mergers something "that today we really believe to be real."

Carter quoted black baseball player Satchel Paige, who said, " 'Don't ever look back, because they're gaining on you.' "

"To the people who oppose this plan, I say I'm sorry," Carter said. "To those who have supported us, I say thank you."

The Fremont-Eddyville sharing plan had drawn opposition from some Fremont students and parents who staged meetings and demonstrations.

Blakesburg, Ottumwa discuss sharing

By HELEN HANNAN March 1988
Courier correspondent

BLAKESBURG — A four-way split of an administrator was one possibility discussed at the joint meeting of the Blakesburg and Ottumwa school boards.

The boards met Tuesday evening in Blakesburg to discuss the possibility of sharing school personnel. Curriculum would be the main responsibility and one option discussed was sharing a curriculum director with Ottumwa, who would be the Blakesburg school superintendent.

When questioned about the division of time, Ottumwa superintendent Dick Geith said that he didn't think an "exact split of time would be a problem. It could be balanced out."

He said he visualized the position as sort of assistant superintendent with a primary responsibility of curriculum development in Ottumwa, with the assistant superintendnent covering the same areas in Blakesburg.

In discussing qualifications, members of both boards generally agreed that a very special person with exceptionally good communications skills would be needed.

Blakesburg school board president Jim Kosman explained that Blakesburg was working in cooperation with Fremont and Eddyville school boards in search of an assistant superintendent to be shared by the three schools.

Geith asked if it "might be feasible to include Ottumwa, and make a four-way split."

Blakesburg Superintendent Bob Hull explained that screening of applicants was being done by the superintendents of the schools involved, with interviewing and hiring to be done jointly by the boards.

Also discussed was the need to make some sort of arrangement to dissolve the partnership by either party at the end of one year if it didn't work out satisfactorily.

Hull described the student sharing program with Eddyville, which was begun this school year and involves about 60 percent of the juniors and seniors. He said it was working very well.

Blakesburg students were competing well and ended the first semester with a composite grade score of a little over 3.0.

The two schools are also sharing an elementary art teacher. Kosman said that the program was very successful.

Discussion of the shared administrator will be continued at a later date.

The Ottumwa baord was invited to attend a joint board session with the other schools Thursday morning at the Sirloin Stockade.

Keith Sasseen, who has been superintendent of Sigourney and Keota schools, will speak to the group concerning some of the problems of shared superintendency.

The boards also discussed sharing of Blakesburg's vocational agriculture instructor. Ottumwa High School principal Ed Kuntz said there seemed to be some interest in a vo-ag program. He wanted to begin with a two-year sequence of soil and crop production and animal husbandry.

Chris Duree, Blakesburg High School principal offered to adopt Ottumwa vo-ag students into the Blakesburg FFA chapter, saying that "Vo-ag might need the FFA program to draw in more kids."

Scott Moxom, Blakesburg vo-ag instructor said that would present no problem. He outlined some of the many aspects of the FFA program, commenting on the leadership and academic and vocational benefits students derive from the program.

Hull said that the Blakesburg FFA program was self-sustaining and the Ottuwma students could be added at no cost to either school.

Kosman added that the vo-ag program covered a lot of areas besides planting corn and raising cattle.

Ottumwa business manager Max Miller said that a sharing program would "make a lot of dollars available to both schools that otherwise wouldn't be available." The state legislature has written several incentives to help finance a variety of shared programs.

Members of both boards agreed it would be easier to shift teachers than to transport students to another school for shared programs.

Kosman said it was "important for patrons to realize we're not trying to close up Blakesburg school. We're trying everything in our power to keep the school open and give students the best education possible."

David Harris, Ottuma school board president said that it was not just state requirements, but also increased university entrance requirements that were difficult to provide during a time of decreased state aid and decreasing enrollment.